

NOMINATION HEARING OF THE HONORABLE
RYAN ZINKE TO BE THE SECRETARY OF THE
INTERIOR

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

JANUARY 17, 2017



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NOMINATION HEARING OF THE HONORABLE RYAN ZINKE TO BE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2017

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:17 p.m. in Room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lisa Murkowski, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

The CHAIRMAN. Good afternoon, everyone. To get started, just to kind of give a lay of the land here this afternoon, I will first proceed with my opening statement, then I will call upon our Ranking Member, Senator Cantwell, to make hers. After Senator Cantwell has concluded her remarks, we will hear from our colleagues, the Montana Senators. Senator Daines and Senator Tester, thank you both. Senator Daines, of course, is on the committee here, and Senator Tester, it is good to have you join us as well. They will introduce our distinguished witness and the other member of the Montana delegation, Representative Ryan Zinke.

After the introductions, as is the committee's long-standing practice with nominees, I will swear in the witness and ask him three questions that we address to all nominees at confirmation hearings.

That is how we will proceed this afternoon. I think it is important for us all to recognize that we also have a vote that is scheduled at about 4:15. That will cause a little bit of an interruption, but we do want to try to move as expeditiously through this hearing as we can.

Before I proceed, I would like to recognize an individual who is well-known to this committee, the former Chairman of the Energy Committee, former Senator Frank Murkowski, who I happen to know well. It is good to have him back. [Laughter.]

A little bit of favoritism there, but it is good to have you here as well.

I would also like to welcome the new members to our committee. We have three new members, and we are pleased to have the new Senator from Nevada, Ms. Cortez Masto, welcome, as well as the new junior Senator from Illinois, Senator Duckworth. It is good to have you as part of the committee. Senator Sessions has also joined the committee. As we know, he is a little busy right now on some

other issues. But we do have three new members, and we welcome them.

This is our first hearing of the new year, a new Congress, a new Administration, and I hope it will also be a new era for the Department of the Interior.

I would like to thank you, Congressman Zinke, for being here. Yours has really been a life of service to our country from your more than two decades as a Navy SEAL, to your time as a Member of the House of Representatives, then, of course most recently, you have answered the call to continue your public work as a Cabinet Secretary for our next President.

We have just begun to get to know one another here, since the President-elect announced his intention to nominate you. I have appreciated the conversations we have had, and I look forward to continuing them in this more formal setting here today.

As you learn more about each of the states that are touched by the Department of the Interior, I particularly appreciate your efforts to understand how and why Alaska is unique among them.

Now to state that Alaska has had a difficult or a tenuous relationship with the outgoing Administration is probably more than an understatement. Instead of seeing us as the State of Alaska, our current President and Secretary seem to see us as Alaska, the national park and wildlife refuge, a broad expanse of wilderness with little else of interest or value.

We have lost access to lands and to waters that even President Carter had promised us would be open to us. We have had our long-standing right to manage wildlife within our borders ripped away. We have seen projects halted through the delay or the denial of vital permits.

For eight years it seemed this Administration has taken the approach that Alaska has to be protected from Alaskans, and they have acted accordingly. The restrictions that we face in resource development are almost unbelievable at times.

Through the Interior Department, the Obama Administration has attempted to ban energy development in nearly all of the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. It has withdrawn tens of thousands of square miles of water outside of those two areas. It has attempted to convert the non-wilderness 1002 area in our coastal plane in ANWR which was set aside by Congress for its energy potential, into de facto wilderness. It has canceled lease sales, closed half of our National Petroleum Reserve, and imposed costly extra legal mitigation requirements. It goes on and on and on, and we have had an opportunity to talk about that.

The Obama Administration has repeatedly violated or sought to evade our "no more" clause. It has rewritten management plans to cut off economic activities and other reasonable uses of public lands. It has deprived us of an opportunity but offered nothing in return, not even to Alaska Native villages that are threatened because of climate change.

This reaches all the way out to King Cove, where our current Secretary rejected a short, one-lane, gravel, noncommercial-use road needed to protect the health and safety of nearly 1,000 Alaskans. Without that road, we have seen 55 medevacs over the past three years alone, including recently an elderly Aleut woman who

had a hip fracture. She was forced to wait more than 40 hours for help to arrive.

While Alaska may be the poster child, the reality is that our state is not alone in having suffered at the hands of the Interior Department. With little regard for local concern and opposition, the President has designated more land and water as national monuments than the previous 18 Presidents combined.

Landscape-level planning, a term that sounds pretty reasonable, is another example of a strategy that has been used to reduce the influence of local areas so that someone sitting here in Washington, D.C. can tell someone living in Fortymile, Alaska, or Blanding, Utah, what their life is going to look like.

Of course, Congressman Zinke, this is the Interior Department that you are walking into, and I am counting on you, as many Alaskans are, and I think many Americans are, to come in and help fix it. I know that you are a Navy man, so excuse the expression, but we hope the cavalry is on the way. I have a list of some things that I think can be done to improve the situation.

We need an Interior Department that fully understands the commitments made to Alaska and abides by them, particularly our “no more” clause. We need the Department to recognize individuals such as John Sturgeon, what they go through when agencies like the Park Service overreach into our lives. We need the Department to restore public access to public lands, to allow us to produce our resources, and to help us restore throughput in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. We need a Department that will lift decades-old public lands orders that no longer serve any purpose other than to allow the Federal Government to control more of Alaska, and that will prioritize the cleanup of contaminated lands and legacy wells.

In Alaska, which has 223 million Federal acres but just one-quarter of 1 percent of its land in private ownership—again, we have 223 million Federal acres and just one-quarter of one percent of land in private ownership—Interior must recognize the importance of land transfers and land exchanges.

We have promises that have been made to our state at statehood that remain unfulfilled, promises made pursuant to ANCSA, promises made to our Native veterans. So know that ensuring that our Federal Government honors those commitments to Alaskans remains one of my highest priorities.

We also need a Department that will rely on the expertise of the state and do more to address our needs from volcanic monitoring to mineral mapping within its budget.

That is a lot on its own, but if you are confirmed, you will also inherit an array of problems and challenges that are much broader in scope. The Park Service reports it has an \$11.3 billion maintenance backlog, meaning that even while some remain intent on acquiring more Federal land, we are not properly taking care of what we already have.

The U.S.-affiliated islands—the territories, like the Northern Marianas, and freely associated states like Palau, have issues ranging from worker visas to compact agreements that cannot be forgotten either.

Then there is the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Whether we are discussing tribal courts, education, infrastructure or development, we

must work together to improve and empower our Native communities. That begins with meaningful consultation with tribes, which is a legal requirement that the outgoing Administration has often failed to meet.

Finally, Congressman Zinke, if you are confirmed, I expect we will work together in a manner that is thoughtful and reflective of a true partnership, and I hope that you will be able to show that the Interior Department is capable of working with rather than against local stakeholders to achieve good results.

I think in the conversations that we have had, you shared a vision of how the Department will look under your direction. We both know that will take hard work and close cooperation with this committee to fulfill your vision. But that work is well worth it for all of us who truly care about our public lands, who want to see them managed well, and who want the public to have access to them, whether for rock climbing, or gold mining or energy development.

So, again, I thank you for being here, and for your willingness to serve.

I would now like to turn to Ranking Member Cantwell for your comments.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARIA CANTWELL, U.S. SENATOR FROM WASHINGTON

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Chairwoman Murkowski, and welcome to the former Chair, Frank Murkowski.

Welcome to the new members of the committee, particularly on our side of the aisle, Senator Duckworth and Senator Cortez Masto. Thank you for being willing to serve on this committee. I look forward to maybe seeing Senator Sessions on the committee. We will leave that for another day's discussion.

Our two colleagues here, thank you for coming to support the nomination of your colleague, who has been nominated by the President-elect to be the Secretary of Interior. I will give you my congratulations on that nomination when we get to the Q&A.

But today, we are here to discuss the Office of the Secretary of Interior as one of the most important offices of the Federal Government because it oversees our national parks, wildlife refuges, public lands, and is responsible for protecting our nation's trust responsibility to Indian country, and, as the Chair mentioned, to insular areas that, frankly, get very little attention here and deserve more attention.

The Secretary is also responsible for much of the nation's onshore and offshore mineral resources, and it also manages the water resources in Western states responsible for our nation's hydro system, something that Senator Wyden and I are very keen on, as well as our colleague from Nevada. It is a far-reaching portfolio, and it is growing, and it very much impacts our economy.

One of the main responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior is overseeing our national parks. The park system includes 417 areas covering more than 84 million acres in every state, with an annual operating budget of almost \$3 billion, and has more than 20,000 employees. Americans treasure their national parks. They drive an outdoor economy that provides over 6.1 million jobs and

\$646 billion in annual revenues, so never underestimate the value of public land when it comes to recreation.

Last year was the 100th anniversary of our national parks, and while we passed a very modest improvement to our national parks, I believe our 100-year celebration deserves more, and I look forward to asking the nominee if he agrees with me on that.

Americans want us to do more to invest in these crown jewels by providing jobs and recreational opportunities and, something I know we all can agree on, fixing the maintenance backlog. One of the successes that the Senate had last Congress was passing bipartisan legislation preserving our special places through bipartisan Land and Water Conservation Fund legislation.

I believe that Congressman Zinke will have a chance to discuss this in his testimony, but I am sure, as an avid sportsman, he knows the value of our public lands and was enthusiastic about us trying to come up with bipartisan legislation to fix the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

My constituents want to know, with the new Administration: are these public lands going to face an unbelievable attack by those who would like to take these public lands away from us and turn them over back to states or are we going to continue to manage these resources as the incredible investment they are and continue to improve so we can get even more economic return?

A second major responsibility of the Department of the Interior is the management of resource extraction over 260 million surface acres, 700 million subsurface acres and 1.7 billion OCS, Outer Continental Shelf.

So today's hearing is about determining whether the nominee is committed to making sure that we minimize environmental harm, and pay for cleanup and that we follow the fundamental principle of "the polluter pays."

There is and continues to be an opportunity for us to ensure that these public policies, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), are getting a fair return for the American taxpayer. We have seen, over time, problems in the fossil fuel program at Interior that, as GAO has said, could cost taxpayers over \$200 million in lost revenue each decade. [The Obama Administration took important steps to try to fix these problems.] The Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 exposed the consequences of failing to have these kinds of regulations, and so the disaster caused us to put in major reforms at the Department of the Interior to make sure important oversight and regulations were not pushed aside and that we monitor these programs.

I would have to say that the coal program is one that needs continued focus and attention, and we will have a chance to talk about this today.

The Obama Administration has adopted rules to ensure a fair return to taxpayers for our national mineral resources, requiring companies to pay for mitigation for the damages that they cause.

Just today, the Government Accountability Office announced a new conclusion after reviewing multiple types of energy and natural resources. The GAO found that coal mining alone gets very special treatment in the ability to have bonding for reclamation requirements. Everyone else—oil and gas producers, wind, solar, and

even hard rock miners—have to post cash or a third-party bond to make sure that they can clean up the pollution that would be caused. This is something that needs to be addressed by the agency, and I would hope that our nominee would address this.

Today's hearing also affords Congressman Zinke the opportunity to demonstrate how he will uphold the trust and treaty obligations to 567 Federally-recognized tribes. This includes overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Education and a \$2.5 billion budget in Indian country.

The reason, Madam Chair, I will take just a minute on this particular point, is that our colleagues, many of whom serve on this committee, also serve on Indian Affairs and will not have the same chance to point these important issues out to the nominee. But clearly, these issues of stewardship as it relates to tribal lands, support for tribal education, social services, and infrastructure—I think regardless of the side of the aisle you sit on, you will hear many things from people both on the Indian Affairs and the Energy Committee about how important these issues are to the constituents that we represent.

It is also critical we understand the nominee's commitment to carrying out our obligations through Insular Affairs. As the Chair mentioned, there are many issues that we will get to in the Q&A.

But I would like to bring up a few issues as it relates to the Pacific Northwest. There are issues where climate has caused greater impacts on both drought and fire damage. This committee has undertaken bipartisan efforts to move forward on both of those issues, collaborative efforts to make sure in both Washington and Oregon we are doing all that we can to plan for better resource management of our water supply and build capacity for the future. And we have reached consensus here in the Senate as well on ways to stop fire borrowing and move forward on what are fuel reduction policies that would better serve our Federal public lands.

I would also mention of particular importance to all of us in the Pacific Northwest the important pending reauthorization, or recommitment, of the Columbia River Treaty, the management of our Federal hydro system between the United States and Canada. It needs a lot of attention and direction, and we hope that we will have a chance to ask you questions about that as well.

So thank you, Madam Chair. I again congratulate the nominee and look forward to hearing from him and his wife and meeting his family as he makes his introduction.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

We will now turn to the Montana Senators for introduction of our nominee. Recognizing your seat on the committee here, Senator Daines, we will turn to you, and then hear from Senator Tester to introduce the nominee to be Secretary of the Interior.

Senator Daines.

STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE DAINES, U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA

Senator DAINES. Madam Chair Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, thank you. It is truly my great honor to introduce a fellow Montanan, an American hero, and a good friend of mine, Con-

gressman Ryan Zinke, and support his confirmation to the position of Interior Secretary of our new President, Donald J. Trump.

Notice you have the entire Montanan congressional delegation before you today. We have both of Montana's Senators, one who is a Republican and one who is a Democrat.

You know, I first met Ryan in 1979 when we were both high school students growing up in Montana. In fact, we were in Dillon, Montana, for Boys State—Ryan from Whitefish High School, and I was representing Bozeman High School. He was captain of the soon-to-be undefeated state champion Whitefish Bulldogs football team. He was also president of his class.

After high school, Ryan went on to the University of Oregon where he was on a full scholarship as a starting athlete for the Oregon Ducks, their football team, where he would win numerous awards for outstanding academic as well as athletic performance. He majored in geology, and it is a subject matter that I know has served him well in serving the people of Montana.

Ryan then enlisted in the United States Navy. Ryan Zinke is a U.S. Navy SEAL commander whose assignments include the elite SEAL Team Six, and part of that tenure was serving under General Mattis as Commander of Joint Special Forces in Iraq at the height of insurgent activity. I would like to highlight Ryan's experience as a SEAL, because Navy SEALs never quit. They do not know the definition of the word because they never do. Navy SEALs also do not fail. They die trying.

It is that work ethic that Ryan Zinke brings with him to every mission he takes, whether it is in the military, in the United States Congress or at the Department of Interior.

During his 23 years of service as a SEAL, Ryan conducted special operations on four continents. He trained and mentored thousands of men and women, and he made sure our troops were as prepared and as safe as absolutely possible when conducting these no-fail missions around the globe.

He was also the guy who the Navy called upon to go into units and see how they could be improved. Whether it was looking at new advancements in technology so our Special Forces could invade new landscapes undetected by the enemy or reviewing existing processes and implementing new policies that our ground force commanders and headquarters could communicate more efficiently during combat, Ryan Zinke has always been a trusted leader of the most demanding missions, and it will be no different at the Department of the Interior.

As the Deputy and Acting Commander of Joint Special Forces in Iraq in 2004, Ryan led a combined force of special operators through the streets of Fallujah as the forward Commander at the height of insurgent terrorist activity in what can only be described, and I quote, "as a warehouse of death." Ryan was charged with implementing a strategy utilizing tens of thousands of personnel, both military and civilian, to advance our mission, and he coordinated with other branches, nations and government agencies to achieve diplomatic and military missions.

Ryan earned two Bronze Stars and many other awards for his service to our great nation. We should also be thankful to his wife, Lola, and their children for their service. I might add, apples do not

fall far from the tree. Ryan's daughter, who is sitting beside him, was a Navy diver, and his son-in-law is also a Navy SEAL.

Following his retirement from the Navy after 23 years of honorable service to our nation, Ryan came back to Montana and he continued to serve, because Ryan ran for and he won a seat in our State Senate and then as Montana's sole Representative for the United States House. In fact, he was the first Navy SEAL ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

Ryan has been a strong supporter of conservationists as well as responsible natural resource development and increased recreation access on our public lands. You see, Ryan grew up 30 minutes from Glacier National Park. I grew up 60 minutes from Yellowstone National Park. We both understand the importance of our national parks. In fact, Ryan and I have shared a Mackenzie boat together, fly-fishing on one of Montana's many blue-ribbon trout streams.

Ryan is intimately familiar with the vast jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior because he has lived it. He has seen his own hometown suffer due to bad government policies that hurt rural communities like Libby, like Malta, like Colstrip, that depend on our public land access.

After all, Ryan is a born and bred Montanan who knows that we must strike that right balance between conservation and responsible energy development, and he understands that one-size-fits-all policies, like we see coming from Washington, D.C., never work for real America.

Ryan Zinke is smart. He has got Montana horse sense. He is the guy you want in your corner, whether you are fighting in the streets of Fallujah for your life or fighting on the floor of Congress for your livelihood. He listens, and he fights for what he believes in. I have no doubt he will be a fighter for America, for our public lands, as the next Secretary of the Interior.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Daines, we appreciate your comments and sharing all that with us.

Senator Tester, thank you for joining us here at the committee, and please, if you will, proceed with your introduction.

STATEMENT OF HON. JON TESTER, U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA

Senator TESTER. It is, indeed, a pleasure, and I want to thank you, Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell, distinguished members of this committee, for allowing me to be here today, because it is an honor today to participate and introduce a decorated Navy veteran and fellow public servant lucky enough to represent the people of the great State of Montana, the Treasure State, the last best place.

Before our time here, both Congressman Zinke and I had the pleasure of serving in the Montana Senate, albeit not at the same time. So I want to thank him again for answering the call to serve our great nation.

I believe it is very important for someone who knows the West to serve as Interior Secretary. The job of Interior Secretary is incredibly important, especially today as America's public lands come under attack by folks who want individual states to manage them,

which is the first step to selling off our public lands to the highest bidder.

It falls on this committee to ask Congressman Zinke specific questions about how he views the responsibilities of Interior Secretary and how he will push back on this Administration with his perspective, his Montana perspective, whenever necessary, things like public lands, keeping public lands in public hands for our kids and grandkids, a very important issue at this moment in time; things like the deferred maintenance and backlog wreaking havoc on our national park system; things like the Land and Water Conservation Fund, how to work with Congress and this Administration to ensure full and devoted funding to initiatives like that visionary LWCF, Land and Water Conservation Fund; as the Chairwoman pointed out, things like trust responsibilities in Indian country, and the ranking member as well, for America's sovereign Indian nations; and, of course, resource development, how to responsibly manage our public lands for energy and resource development and how to balance that with respect to clean water and clean air and wildlife and the habitat that supports them.

I am particularly encouraged by the Congressman's support for protecting the gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Just recently, when a mining company proposed to drill just a few miles from the doorstep of this nation's first national park, the Congressman joined me and local businesses and community leaders to protect our outdoor economy.

Of course, there are issues that the Congressman and I do not see eye to eye, but if he provides you with the answers that he has provided to me, I expect you will find that he is well-equipped to hold this post with accountability.

As a westerner, I know what is at stake, so I am honored to introduce Congressman Zinke to this committee. I trust that a Navy SEAL, as always, will shoot straight.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Tester. Thank you both for being here and providing introductions for our nominee.

With that, Representative Zinke, if you will come forward. Before asking you to begin your opening statement and introducing your family, I will ask that we proceed with administering the oath, which is customary in hearings such as this one. Then I am going to ask three questions, again, customary to operations within this committee.

So the rules of the committee, which apply to all nominees, require they be sworn in, in connection with their testimony. So please raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

The CHAIRMAN. Before you begin your statement, I will ask you three questions that we address to each nominee before the committee.

Will you be available to appear before the committee and other congressional committees to represent departmental positions and respond to issues of concern to the Congress?

Mr. ZINKE. I will.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you aware of any personal holdings, investments, or interests that would constitute a conflict or create an ap-

pearance of such a conflict, should you be confirmed and assume the office to which you have been nominated by the President?

Mr. ZINKE. Madam Chairman, my investments, personal holdings, and other interests have been reviewed by both myself and the appropriate ethics counselors within the Federal Government. I have taken all appropriate action to avoid any conflicts of interest, and there are no conflicts of interest or appearances thereof, to my knowledge.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Final question, are you involved or do you have any assets that are held in blind trust?

Mr. ZINKE. I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Representative Zinke. You may proceed with introduction of your family and your opening statement, and welcome to the committee.

TESTIMONY OF HON. RYAN ZINKE, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR MONTANA

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you, Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the committee. Thank you also Montana Senators Tester and Daines for their kind remarks, leadership and continued service on behalf of our great Treasure State.

It is an honor to appear before this esteemed Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Before beginning my remarks, I would like to introduce and recognize members of my family who have joined me today. My wife, Lolita, who is also a member of President-elect's Hispanic Advisory Council; my two grandchildren, Matilda and Charlotte; my daughter, Jennifer; and, her husband, Jack.

The CHAIRMAN. Welcome.

Mr. ZINKE. And for the record, I did tell my daughter, "Don't join the Navy and don't marry a Navy SEAL." And she did both. [Laughter.]

My sons, Wolfgang and Konrad, are back at school and hopefully studying today, so they will not be with us.

As a son of a plumber and a kid who grew up in a small timber town and railroad town in Whitefish near Glacier Park, I am humbled to be before you as the President-elect's designee for Secretary of the Interior. I am also deeply humbled because of the great responsibility the position holds to be the steward of our majestic lands, the champion of our great Indian nations and the manager and voice of our diverse wildlife.

Upfront, I am an unabashed admirer of Teddy Roosevelt and believe he had it right when he placed under Federal protection millions of our acres of Federal lands and set aside much of it as our national forests. Today, those lands provide Americans the opportunity to hike, fish, camp, recreate and enjoy the great outdoors.

It was on these lands that my father taught me to hunt and fish, and the Boy Scouts taught me the principles of environmental stewardship and the importance of public access. It is also on these lands that many communities, like the community I grew up in, rely on to harvest timber, mine and to provide our nation with critical energy.

Without question, our public lands are America's treasures and are rich in diversity. I fully recognize and appreciate there are lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed under the John Muir model of wilderness, where man has a light touch and is an observer. I also fully recognize the preponderance of our Federal holdings are better suited under the Pinchot model of multiple use, using best practices, sustainable policies and objective science.

During the recent centennial of our National Park Service, I found myself at a ceremony at Yellowstone National Park, our first national park established by Congress and signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant on March 1, 1872.

As I enjoyed the celebration under the famous Roosevelt Arch, I could not help but notice the words etched on the stone above, "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people." I also could not help but notice on the plaque on the side, it said "Erected by Congress." When I saw that, I thought this is the perfect policy of land that our great nation should uphold.

In order to have great deeds and accomplish great things, both sides have to work together. Higher purpose can only be achieved by both sides coming together for higher purpose. In a nutshell, that is my commitment to you.

If confirmed, I will work with each of you to ensure our public lands reflect higher purpose, so that our children's children, my granddaughters' children, can look back and say we did it right.

I have almost met every member of this committee, and I understand that each state is different. I also understand that issues within your state are different and you have different priorities, but I am confident that we can work together to get the job done. When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks.

The first is to restore trust and working with, rather than against, local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger and even hatred against some Federal management policies. Being a listener and a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second is to prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion in backlog of maintenance and repair of our national parks. The President-elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill, and I am committed and need your help in making sure that bill includes our national treasures.

Third, to ensure that the professionals in the front line, that is our managers and rangers, have the right tools, the right resources and the flexibility to make the right decisions to give a voice to the people they represent.

As a former Montana State Senator and current Congressman, I have learned a lot since I was a SEAL in the deserts of Iraq. To accomplish my mission as Secretary of Interior, if confirmed, I know that I am going to need your help. I am going to need your confidence and even perhaps your prayers.

I look forward to answering your questions and, if confirmed, representing the interests of our great nation in giving a voice to all Americans, to include our great Indian nations, on how we manage, sustain our public lands and the treasures they contain.

Madam Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and this committee, and I look forward to your questions. [The prepared statement of Mr. Zinke follows:]

CONGRESSMAN RYAN ZINKE BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND
NATURAL RESOURCES, JANUARY 17, 2017

Thank you Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Committee. Thank you also Montana Senators Tester and Daines for your kind remarks, leadership, and continued service on behalf of the Treasure State and our great Nation. It is an honor to appear before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to recognize the members of my family who have joined me today. My wife Lolita who is a member of President-elect's National Hispanic Advisory Council, my daughter Jennifer and her husband Jack, and my two granddaughters Matilda and Charlotte. I told my daughter two things: Don't join the Navy and don't marry a Navy SEAL. I am proud to say that she ignored my advice, was a Navy Diver and married a Navy SEAL. I am very proud of her. My sons Wolfgang and Konrad have returned to school and I hope are studying today.

As a son of a plumber and a kid who grew up in a small timber and railroad town next to Glacier National Park in Montana, I am humbled to be before you as the President-elect's designee for Secretary of the Interior. I am also humbled because of the great responsibility the position holds to be the steward of majestic public lands, the champion of our great Indian nations, and the manager and voice of our diverse wildlife.

Upfront, I am an unapologetic admirer of Teddy Roosevelt and believe he had it right when he placed under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands and set aside much of it as National forests. Today, much of those lands provide Americans the opportunity to hike, fish, camp, recreate and enjoy the great outdoors. It was on those lands that my father taught me to fish and hunt, and the Boy Scouts taught me the principles of environmental stewardship and the importance of public access. It is also these lands that many communities, like the town I grew up in, rely on to harvest timber, mine, and to provide our nation with energy. Without question, our public lands are America's treasure and are rich in diversity.

I fully recognize and appreciate that there are lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed under the John Muir model of wilderness, where man is more of an observer than an active participant. I also recognize that the preponderance of our federal holdings are better suited to be managed under the Pinchot model of multiple use using best practices, sustainable policies, and objective science.

During the recent centennial of our National Park Service, I found myself at the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park, our first National Park established by Congress and signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant on March 1, 1872. As I enjoyed the celebration under the famous Roosevelt arch, I could not help but notice the words etched in the stone at the top of the arch "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people." And, on the side of the right pillar was a plaque with the words "Created by Act of Congress." I thought "What a perfect symbol" of what our land policy in a Nation as great as ours should be. The lesson here is this. It takes both sides to create an arch that serves higher purpose and that higher purpose is best achieved through the approval and consent of Congress. In a nutshell, that is my commitment to you. If confirmed, I will work with each of you to ensure the use of our public lands reflects higher purpose so that our children's children can look back and say "we did it right". I have met with almost every member of the Committee and understand that each state is different, and you have different priorities and issues. I am confident we can work together to get the job done.

When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks.

The first is to restore trust by working with rather than against local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger, and even hatred against some federal management policies. Being a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second, is to prioritize the estimated 12.5 billion dollars in backlog of maintenance and repair in our National Parks. The President elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill, and I am going to need your help in making sure that bill includes shoring up our Nation's treasures.

And third, to ensure the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As a former Montana State Senator and current Congressman, I have learned a lot since I was a SEAL in the deserts of Iraq. To accomplish my mission as Secretary of Interior, I know that I am going to need your help, confidence, and perhaps even prayers. I look forward to answering your questions and, if confirmed, representing the interests of our great nation and giving a voice to all Americans, to include our great Indian Nations, on how we manage and sustain our public lands and treasures they contain.

Madam Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Congressman Zinke.

I could not see her when you were seated in front, but I would also like to recognize the Representative from American Samoa who is with us today, Congresswoman Radewagen. It is good to have you here. Obviously, there is a great deal of interest in that aspect of the jurisdiction coming out of the Interior Department.

Congressman, I would like to talk about land management. You and I have had a good deal of conversation about the necessity to manage our lands and manage them well. If confirmed, you are going to be responsible for managing over 245 million surface acres and 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate. I think we both recognize that is a pretty weighty responsibility.

Over one-fifth of it is in my state, and that means your land management efforts have an overwhelming impact on the State of Alaska. We refer to the Secretary of Interior effectively as Alaska's landlord. You are probably the most consequential member of the Administration, outside of the President, in terms of issues that we work with, so I take this nomination very, very seriously.

I mentioned in my opening statement, we have had a number of disagreements and a very difficult relationship at times with the Obama Administration. You have acknowledged that each of our states are different. I have walked you through our map and tried to outline why we are unique, why we are bigger and better and broader and faster and more complicated and more challenging than most others.

So my question to you, very broadly, is how will your approach to management of Alaska's lands be different than what we have seen? How will your recognition of the unique aspects of a state like Alaska be different in these years going forward?

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you, and thanks for the question.

As you know, as we visited with each other, Alaska is different and I recognize that. As a Navy SEAL, I have spent time in Kodiak, and I have spent time in the Aleutian chain. I have not spent a lot of time in the interior.

But clearly, what has happened is folks in Alaska are upset. They feel like the management, they have no voice. If you are looking at the timber assets along the coast in the southern part of Alaska, those timber assets, forest fires occur, and yet, we cannot harvest a tree. Inland, your pipeline is down at 40 percent. Engineering-wise, there are a lot of issues when your pipeline, the backbone of Alaska's energy, is that low.

A lot of it, I think, has to do with these cost-savings mechanisms put in place. What has occurred is we have taken the field and we have made those in the field—and have taken away the resources

and keep on bringing them up to consolidation, layers and layers and layers. A lot of these decisions should be made on the field on the ground by people that are closest to the problem.

These are people that live in communities. A lot of the BLM managers live in the communities, and they understand the communities have to have a voice.

And I do recognize Alaska is different. It needs to be handled differently because of the size. I also understand, and thanks to your maps, I clearly understand that private land equity in Alaska is so incredibly small. Your resources are incredibly large, and the great people of Alaska need to be a partner in the proper development of those resources.

The CHAIRMAN. We look forward to a partnership and an even partnership, because when it comes to consultation, when it comes to truly listening to Alaskans, it just feels that we have fallen upon deaf ears. So a more welcoming dialogue I think is what we are anticipating going forward.

When we talk about the resources of Alaska and Alaska's willingness to share those resources with the rest of the country, and truly the world, one of our great assets is our oil reserves that we have up north. As you mentioned, our Trans-Alaska Pipeline is running three-quarters empty. It now carries a little less than 500,000 barrels a day, and it is not due to lack of resource. It is, instead, a lack of permission to access those resources.

Will you commit to a formal review of all of the Obama Administration's actions that took resource-bearing lands and waters in Alaska effectively off the table, including the decisions that specifically prevented the leasing of those lands and those waters for development, and determine whether or not they can be reversed?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes. I think the President-elect has said that we want to be energy independent. As a former Navy SEAL, I think I have been to 63 countries in my lifetime. I can guarantee you it is better to produce energy domestically under reasonable regulation than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. I have seen the consequences of what happens when you do not have any regulation in the Middle East.

We can do it right. The backbone of our environmental policies has been NEPA and I am a strong supporter of NEPA, but we also have to understand that we need an economy.

And, look, if we do not have an economy as a country, then the rest of it does not matter, because we are not going to be able to afford a strong military, nor are we going to be able to afford to keep the promises we have made as a great nation. And we have made a lot of promises to education, to our children's future, to infrastructure, to Social Security. All of that takes an economy that is moving forward, and energy is a part of that economy and Alaska is a critical part of that economy.

Alaska is different for a reason. You are blessed with great resources. You are blessed with great recreation, a little cold in the winter, but it is not Palm Springs.

The CHAIRMAN. You are from Montana. You can handle it.

Mr. ZINKE. We can handle it.

But, yes, I think we need to be prudent. And always, I think we need to review things to make sure we are doing it right, because,

over time, the government keeps on getting bigger and bigger, the bureaucracy gets larger and larger. And we can get something done. I think, as a nation, we should look at everything with an objective eye to get things done.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I will now turn to Senator Cantwell, the Ranking Member.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Congressman Zinke. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

Obviously, going from Congressman to then Secretary of the Interior means a different kind of portfolio, so I was hoping in this first round, because there are so many people who want to ask questions, if I could cover three issues quickly with you, and then give our colleagues a chance to ask questions.

First, obviously, you, representing the district that you do in Montana, have made a lot of statements about coal, and I just, for the record, want to understand where you are. Do you believe the Administration does have a right and should have a review to update information about our coal program?

Mr. ZINKE. I think always transparency is important. Any Administration has the right to look at it and ask the right questions in all of our energy fields.

Senator CANTWELL. So you would not stop the review that is underway now?

Mr. ZINKE. I think a review is good. I do not know the specifics of that review, but I think we should always look at our energy portfolio with an objectiveness because it is important.

Senator CANTWELL. You do not have an objection to taxpayers getting a fair value?

Mr. ZINKE. Ma'am, I think taxpayers should always get a fair value.

Senator CANTWELL. Including on coal.

Mr. ZINKE. Including our coal, wind, all-of-the-above, ma'am.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you.

And on the GAO statement about surety, making sure that coal companies have the capability, just as other energy companies do, do you support that as well?

Mr. ZINKE. I think on the GAO—again, I have not read the specifics, but if it is a question that involves bonding—

Senator CANTWELL. Bonding. Yes.

Mr. ZINKE. I am from Montana where we have Decker. We have a lot of coal mines, strip mines and stuff, and I think bonding is important.

I am also from a state that, in the 1800s, mined gold by going up and down streambeds and taking all the material and dumping it upside down. I do not think we want to go back to those days.

Some of the reclamation problems we have and face in the West still are not repaired. Teddy Roosevelt had the courage to look 100 years forward. I think we need to have the courage today to look 100 years forward and look back and say we did it right.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, I hope that was a great endorsement of the Stream Protection Rule. But on the Teddy Roosevelt point, do you support making the Land and Water Conservation program permanent?

Mr. ZINKE. I do. I think land and water conservation has been important to Montana, certainly in many of the states. I do think we should look at it. If you are in the Gulf States, I understand their point, that the revenue comes from all offshore, and very little of it goes within the states that are affected most by the offshore industry. So I do think we need to look at revenues and evening out the revenue source. I think always you should look at programs to make sure more revenue goes to projects, so making sure the bureaucracy has not grown over time. And lastly, I do think the states should have a say. The local communities should have a say of where those funds go, more of a say than they sometimes do today.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, that in and of itself might lead me to go down a different line of questioning as it relates to making sure Federal lands stay in Federal hands, as your colleague from Montana said. But I want to cover the park area backlog and budget.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, we faced the 100-year anniversary. The Teddy Roosevelt theme that you have struck is very important because, as I mentioned, we are talking about billions of dollars to our economy from the outdoor access to our public lands.

Do you think we need to go further than what we have done in supporting our national parks and getting rid of the maintenance backlog?

Mr. ZINKE. I do. I feel very strongly about it, because, as you point out, a lot of our national parks this last year are at capacity. We have had record numbers. So looking forward, what do we do about it? A lot of it is repairing the roads, backlogs, trails, but also looking at the public lands around the park to make sure we look at those trail systems, to make sure that the restrooms are clean, to make sure the sewer systems work.

When you are talking about a \$12.5 billion backlog, I was over at the transition office, and oddly enough, I looked at the park in front of the Department of Interior, the very park that everyone working in the Department of Interior goes by every day. The fountains do not even work, and they are in need of repair.

Then you start asking, well, what about the rest of Washington, D.C.? Well, it turns out that very few fountains work. Then you look at the bridge, the Memorial Bridge, that goes across to Arlington. I guess that need is \$150 million, so we better get on it.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. We are out of time, but I will come back to this question, because there has been a lot of discussion about your viewpoint and resolutions in platforms and House votes about Federal land staying in Federal hands, but we will come back to that in the second round.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

Senator Hoeven.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I would like to thank you, Congressman Zinke, for your service to the country and the United States Navy and for your willingness to serve as Secretary of Interior. Also, I want to thank your family for their commitment to serve as well and for being here.

Talk for a minute, if you would, about a balanced approach to multiple use, many different resources and many different constituencies that you have to deal with, the national parks, but also public lands, Native American affairs.

For example, in the BLM, the Bureau of Land Management, you manage 245 million surface acres, 700 million acres of subsurface minerals. Talk about how you manage that in a way that is balanced and multiple use.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, multiple use, in the spirit of Roosevelt, means you can use it for multiple purposes. I am particularly concerned about public access. I am a hunter, a fisherman.

But multiple use is also making sure that what you are going to do, you know, and you go in with both eyes open. That means sustainability. That means that it does not have to be in conflict if you have recreation over mining. You just have to make sure that you understand what the consequence of each of those uses are.

It is our public land, and what I have seen most recently is our access is being shut off, roads are being shut off. We are all getting older, and when you do not have access to our hunting areas, traditional fishing areas, then it makes it an elite sport. And I am particularly concerned about the elitism of our traditional hunting, fishing and snowmobiles.

So making our public lands accessible and in the spirit of multiple use. Single use, if you look at the Muir model of some of our national parks in some areas, I agree. There are some areas that need to be set aside that are absolutely appropriate for man to be an observer. There are special places in our country that deserve that recognition. But a lot of it is traditional uses of what we find in North Dakota and Montana where you can hunt and you can fish, you can drill an oil well, make sure there is a reclamation project, make sure there is a permit, make sure there is NEPA.

If you are going to do something that is more intrusive, make sure you monitor the water. Everyone enjoys clean water, and we should. I do not think they are necessarily in conflict. I think you have to do it right.

Senator HOEVEN. Well, as somebody who likes to hunt and fish, I appreciate that answer very much.

Also in North Dakota, we have had a real challenge with the Dakota Access Pipeline protest. You and I have talked about it. State and local law enforcement has worked very hard to keep the peace and to keep people safe, but we need Federal law enforcement help as well. In your case, that is going to mean BIA law enforcement.

So my question is, if you are confirmed, will you ensure that BIA law enforcement works with state and local law enforcement to resolve the situation, to keep people safe and to make sure that the rule of law is followed?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, sir, and we talked about it in your office. If confirmed, I am going to be a very busy man traveling. I am going to travel to Utah, travel to Alaska, and travel to North Dakota. Those are three impending problems that we need to resolve quickly.

I have great respect for the Indian nations. I am adopted Assiniboine. The last time the Sioux nations all got together, I would say General Custer probably would say that was not a good issue.

So you look at this and there are deep cultural ties. There is a feeling like that we have not been a fair consult and a fair partner. So I think we need to listen to that voice.

And that is part of the trust, is that, outside of Washington, D.C., when you start going west to North Dakota, there is a lot of anger. There is a lot of mistrust. Not everywhere, but enough where I am concerned. I am concerned that we need to be better partners. We need to work together.

We need to work together as a Congress. We all rise and fall on the same tide, and we all love our public lands. And the duty of the Department of Interior, as a Secretary, is to make sure we have broad consensus of what we are doing. And every state is different.

Senator HOEVEN. All right. Thank you.

My final question is one-size-fits-all. Too often in Federal Government we see a one-size-fits-all versus empowering states and people at the local level to do what makes the most sense, given their part of the country. I would ask you to just give your opinion on the one-size-fits-all versus working with states and localities and tribes to do what works across the country.

Mr. ZINKE. I would characterize it, the view from the Potomac is a lot different from the Missouri. And you do need to listen to local folks and state, because they live there. The consequence of an action that is one-size-fits-all affects real people. I do think you need to have a voice. You need to listen, and you make sure that you involve the communities at the lowest level.

Again, some cases, you know, we have a lot of BLM assets. I know a lot of rangers, and there is a lot of frustration on the front-line too. They do not feel they are empowered to make a decision. Their kids go to the same schools. But when they do not have the power or the flexibility or the resources to make the decision, everything is four or five layers above, that is part of what we face.

We have to re-incentivize the line, remove some of the middle management, and get them out where they are necessary. That is the front line, and that is from basic 101 as being a SEAL. If your front line is not happy, and that is the chiefs and the sergeant, then I can tell you the rest of the force is not doing very well either.

So in this case, the frontline of BLM and the Park Service needs to be shored up with the flexibility to make the right call.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Congressman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We will next turn to Senator Sanders. I would just advise committee members, we have always operated under this early bird rule, and perhaps there has been some discussion about what really counts for early bird, but I am going by what the Clerk has observed when members came in. So Senator Sanders will go next, and he will be followed by Senator Gardner.

Senator SANDERS. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And, Congressman Zinke, thanks very much for your willingness to serve. I have three areas that I want to touch on.

President-elect Trump has suggested—more than suggested—stated in his view that climate change is a “hoax.” Now I know that you are not here to be Administrator of the EPA or Secretary of

Energy, but the issue of climate change is in fact very important for issues that the Department of the Interior deals with.

Is President-elect Trump right? Is climate change a hoax?

Mr. ZINKE. The best answer is three things.

First of all, the climate is changing. That is undisputable. I am from Glacier National Park.

Senator SANDERS. You do not have any more glaciers there, huh?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, and I have seen glaciers over the period of my time recede. As a matter of fact, when my family and I have eaten lunch on Grinnell Glacier, the glacier has receded during lunch.

Senator SANDERS. If you could, is the President-elect right? Is climate change a hoax?

Mr. ZINKE. If I can continue, two more points, and I will make it short.

The second thing is man has had an influence. I think that is undisputable as well.

So climate is changing. Man has influenced. I think where there is the debate on it is what that influence is, what can we do about it. And as Secretary of the Department of the Interior, I will inherit, if confirmed, the USGS.

We have great scientists there. I am not a climate scientist expert, but I can tell you I will become a lot more familiar with it, and it will be based on objective science.

I do not believe it is a hoax. I believe we—

Senator SANDERS. You do not believe it is a hoax?

Mr. ZINKE. No. I believe we should be prudent to be prudent. That means, I do not know definitively. There is a lot of debate on both sides of the aisle.

Senator SANDERS. Actually, there is not a whole lot of debate now. The scientific community is virtually unanimous that climate change is real and causing devastating problems. There is debate on this committee but not within the scientific community.

Next question, but dealing with climate change, if climate change is already causing devastating problems, should we allow fossil fuel to be drilled on public lands?

Mr. ZINKE. Again, we need an economy and jobs, too. In my experience, I have probably seen 63 different countries. I have seen what happens when you do not have—

Senator SANDERS. I do not mean to be rude, but I am taking your answer to be, yes, we should allow fossil fuel to be drilled on public lands.

Mr. ZINKE. I am an all-of-the-above energy—I want to be honest with you. I am all-of-the-above.

Senator SANDERS. Will you encourage wind and solar on public lands?

Mr. ZINKE. I will encourage, absolutely, wind and solar. All-of-the-above. I think the better solution, going forward, is all-of-the-above energy.

Senator SANDERS. Some of my conservative friends believe that the day should come when we should privatize the National Park System. What is your feeling on that?

Mr. ZINKE. I want to be clear on this point. I am absolutely against transfer or sale of public land.

Senator SANDERS. Good. That is a clear answer.

Mr. ZINKE. Cannot be any more clear.

Senator SANDERS. No, you cannot. Thank you.

I have had the opportunity in the last year or so to get around the country. With that opportunity, I have met with many Native American tribes. You discussed this issue.

I think it is not debatable that, throughout history, including today, the United States Government has treated the Native American people with disrespect, has ripped them off, has abrogated treaties. And right now, we have, in many Native American communities and reservations, people living in unbelievable poverty, incredibly high unemployment rate, youth suicide unspeakably high.

Do you agree with that assertion? And if so, what do you propose to do to improve life for the Native American people throughout this country?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, I have great respect for the Indian nations, and Montana has some of the great nations. The gentleman behind me is from the great Crow Nation.

I think there are three things. Sovereignty should mean something. When we say a Nation is sovereign, it should have weight.

Secondly—

Senator SANDERS. Stay on that one, because you are right. Sovereignty should mean something. What does that mean if you, in fact, receive the nomination?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, I can tell you, from the perspective of a Montana Congressman, the paperwork, the bureaucracy within reservations far exceeds what is outside. Perhaps at one time we viewed the Indian nations as almost child-like where we had to manage every aspect of their affairs, and it has affected their ability for self-determination, because we have not—

Senator SANDERS. Good. I agree with you.

Let me just, also, health care and education are serious problems on many reservations. Will you take a hard look at those issues and try to improve the quality of health care and education for the Native American people?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, I will. And I take it seriously, because I have been to Lame Deer, and as bad as the VA is—

Senator SANDERS. Well, some of us do not accept that.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, as bad as the VA is, Indian Health in Montana is worse. Let me repeat that: It is worse.

I think when you have individuals that need care that line up, and you have only a few doctors, and they do not see the doctor, and the next day they come back and they do not see the doctor, they do not see the doctor, and the doctor—

Senator SANDERS. That is an issue that you are going to address?

Mr. ZINKE. I am sorry, sir?

Senator SANDERS. You will address that issue of health care?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, sir.

Senator SANDERS. Good.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator SANDERS. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Gardner.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Ranking Member Cantwell.

Congressman Zinke, thank you very much for being here today and your commitment to service of this nation. And to your family, welcome as well.

I was pleased to hear your comment to Senator Cantwell regarding making the LWCF, Land and Water Conservation Fund, permanent. I believe that LWCF is the most important conservation program in this country. Every state has been touched. Every state has had iconic landscapes preserved by LWCF for the enjoyment of generations to come, and that is extremely important.

The outdoor recreation economy in Colorado is about \$13.2 billion in economic impact, creating over 125,000 jobs in our state. LWCF is a very important part of that. Would you reiterate your commitment to me that you will work with Congress to make LWCF permanent?

Mr. ZINKE. You have my full commitment. All three of the Montana delegation voted in favor of it. It is an important program, especially in the West.

In Montana, it is particularly important in public access. The checkerboard system out West has made it difficult sometimes to transit between Forest Service and BLM, and you need a bridge to go between the two, and the LWCF has been important in doing that. So I would support that.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you very much. I have always told Coloradans that one thing we need to do is have more Colorado in Washington and less Washington in Colorado. But one of the things I think we can do is maybe take a little bit of Washington and make it less Washington. Perhaps we can cure some agencies like the BLM of Potomac fever by moving them out of Washington.

For example, if you just look at the numbers the Congressional Research Service uses, the Bureau of Land Management administers roughly 248.3 million acres of public land—248.3 million acres; 248.2 million acres are located west of the Mississippi River. That is over 99 percent of BLM lands located out West.

There is no question that having some headquarters out West would, I think, vastly improve and result in better policies for ranchers, for landowners, for energy producers, for constituents who enjoy these lands.

BLM Planning 2.0 was a great example of how little Washington understands about the West and how bureaucrats get in the way of how things work in the West, and the one-size-fits-all approach has failed public policy.

Congressman Zinke, do you believe in the notion of putting our Federal work force, at least portions of it at the Department of Interior that specialize in public lands initiatives, closer to the lands and the people that they affect?

Mr. ZINKE. I think they should be closer to the land. In some instances in Utah, where you have 67 percent is BLM, you can look at different management schemes on it. The Department of Ag has stewardship programs. There are a lot of tools that we can use.

But I think the bottom line is, the decisions oftentimes are better at the frontline if you empower your people to do them. There is a saying in the military, centralized direction, decentralized execution. That means we should hold true NEPA. We should hold true

the values that we believe as a country we should uphold, public access, clean air, clean water.

But how you execute day-to-day operations sometimes, often times, it is better if it is done on the frontline. They live it every day.

Senator GARDNER. So your commitment to work with me on moving agencies like BLM to the West—

Mr. ZINKE. I am committed to look at our organization across-the-board of what we are going to look like as a Department 100 years from now.

Roosevelt, I keep going back to Roosevelt because I am a great admirer, but I think he did a lot of things right. I mean, Roosevelt about 100 years ago decided to take a bold move, and it was not particularly supported at the time, not by all parties. But he did do a lot which we live in the legacy of Roosevelt today.

I think we have to be bold and look at what the Department of the Interior should look like 100 years from now to better manage the problems that we have coming, and there are a lot of problems.

No doubt, recreation is going to be a bigger piece. They are not making any more land. We need to make sure what we are doing is appropriate. We need to make sure that clean air, clean water, those types of things, again, so my daughter's children will look back and say we did it right. I think that has to be a goal that we all share.

Senator GARDNER. The final question in the time remaining is this. If you go into the Colorado State Capitol, there is a saying written on the wall that says, "Here is a land where history is written in water." All the water in Colorado flows out of the state. No water flows into the state. So that is an incredibly important part of who we are as a state.

I would like your commitment today to work to protect private water rights when it comes to our water rights system, understanding that Federal overreach into water is dangerous for our municipalities, our industries, and our individual water right holders, but also to continue to work with us on permits and water storage projects as we work along with water conservation. The need to store more water in the West is real.

So we need additional help protecting water rights from the Federal Government but also being able to store more water for the future enjoyment, growth, development and opportunities in the American West.

Mr. ZINKE. There is no doubt that water today is a commodity and will be a more important commodity tomorrow.

There is a saying in Montana that whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting, because water is incredibly important across the West and almost every state. Even Michigan, with their recent thing.

My commitment is to work with you. We are going to have to, in part of the infrastructure bill, we are going to have to look at water storage. We are going to have to look at better ways to use water, relying on it. Some of our aquifers are at risk on that.

But water, particularly if you are an ag community, a recreation community, their water is today an issue. Tomorrow, it is going to

be a bigger issue, unless we invest in the infrastructure and policies that make sense for tomorrow.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Heinrich. And he will be followed by Senator Alexander.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Congressman Zinke, you said earlier in the hearing that you opposed selling off public lands or turning them over to the states; however, on the opening day of the 115th Congress, you voted for a House rule that makes it easier to give away our public lands based on the idea that those public lands have no financial value, no score. How do you square the two things?

Mr. ZINKE. The vote was a rule vote in the House. That was one of many rules. I would characterize it as it was an indicator of how upset people are about our land policy at the moment. Particularly if you were in Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado in some places, people are upset. Idaho, Montana.

But it has no weight unless it is executed. So I think it is a shot across the bow that we have to do something. I started out my remarks by saying my number one is trust. I have to go out there and restore trust. The reason why—one of the reasons why people want to sell or transfer public land is there is no trust, because they feel like they do not have a voice. They feel that they do not matter. They should matter.

Senator HEINRICH. Congressman, if that rule was not part of a bigger package, if it stood alone, would you support it?

Mr. ZINKE. I would not. I think I voted 17 times against either transfer or sale of public land or in favor of LWCF.

Senator HEINRICH. That is a great answer.

You mentioned that you are a big Teddy Roosevelt fan. Many of us are. In 1906, he signed the Antiquities Act. Eighteen states had new national monuments established in the past 6 years.

In my home State of New Mexico, we have two new monuments that have already proven to be incredibly popular with local communities and which are already driving economic growth for local businesses. Frankly, my Navajo and Pueblo constituents are also very supportive of the new Bears Ears National Monument because it protects some of the most sacred sites in their historical homeland.

I have letters here from business owners, sportsmen, faith leaders, county commissioners, and veterans in New Mexico asking for your support for the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monuments. Madam Chairman, I would just ask that you allow me to submit these for the record?

The CHAIRMAN. They will be included as part of the record.

[The information referred to follows:]



January 13, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
U.S. House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative and Secretary of Interior Nominee Zinke:

As business owners across New Mexico, we face many challenges. When it comes to economic and job growth, New Mexico is ranked as one of the worst in the nation. In 2015, we ranked 32nd in GDP growth, and 45th in unemployment. It is clear that a supportive business climate is needed in our state.

An economic bright spot for our businesses has been the National Monument designations of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks (OMDP) in 2013 and Rio Grande del Norte (RGDN) in 2014. Both areas have seen an increase in visitation, with concurrent benefits to local communities, since their designation.

According to BLM data, from Fiscal Year 2015 to 2016, visitation to OMDP has grown by 102 percent. At RGDN, visitation for the two most recent fiscal years, 2015 and 2016, has seen a 45 percent increase when compared to the two years immediately prior to the monument's designation (2011 and 2012).

At the local level, we feel the positive impact of National Monuments. Increased visitation has resulted in increased revenues and we view the designation of these national monuments as part of a new positive economic climate geared toward developing a strong, resilient economy that builds community wealth.

Business and communities near the monuments are using RGDN and OMDP to recruit and retain the emerging "quality of life" workforce, to attract retirees interested in active lifestyles and quick access to protected public lands, and to develop new products and services.

It is clear to us that protecting our beautiful, culturally rich, and historically- and scientifically-significant public lands supports New Mexico's economic growth. As more Americans spend their time and dollars on outdoor recreation, we expect to see these positive trends continue in New Mexico. Our state is a shining example of the positive economic impact National Monuments can have on local communities.

We urge you to do all you can to ensure the continued existence, funding and access to our monuments, and to resist any efforts to shrink or repeal them.

Sincerely,

A. Christine Putnam
Putnam-Pritchard Interiors/Nubu Design
Santa Fe

Abbey Carver
Brazito Farms
Mesilla Park

Adam Harper
Osceola Energy
Albuquerque

Alena Gilchrist
Elevation Energy Consulting, LLC.
Taos

Alex Amacher
Teres Kids
Santa Fe

Alice Benjamin
Sewist With a Twist
Las Cruces

Alicia Garcia
WESST
Las Cruces

Amy Tischler
Simply Social Media
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Annata Black
GA Black
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April Christensen
The Village Development Center
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Arianna Parsons
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Las Cruces

Ayla Bystrom-Williams
HoneyMoon Brewery
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Wordsmith, LLC
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Ben Gabriel
Friends of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks
Las Cruces

Ben Thomas
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
Ranchos de Taos

Bill Kipnis
Siemens Industries
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Blanca Surgeon
Blanca Surgeon Consulting
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Bob Diven
Diven Art/Fish Out of Water Productions,
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Bob Nash
Oldawan Tools to Stay Sharp
Santa Fe

Bobbe Besold
Seat Of The Pants
Santa Fe

Alicia Garcia
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Las Cruces

Carla Freeman
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Carol Campbell
Wellness Improvement Experts
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Carrie Hamblen
Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce
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McClure Publications
Las Cruces

Cecilia Galban
Flashpoint Presentation Design
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Celerah Hewes
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Christian Casillas
Self-employed
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Cliff Feigenbaum
GreenMoney Journal / GreenMoney.com
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Downtown Desert Yoga
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Colleen McCann
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Daniel Allan
Daniel Allan, MD
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Daniel Quat
Daniel Quat Photography, LLC.
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Dawn Chander
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Santa Fe

Dawn Hommer
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Dawn Owen
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Deanna Green
Enchanted Occasions Event Rentals
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Common Ground Mediation Services
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Debra Sands-Miller
Desert Habitat Designs
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Create, Inc.
Las Cruces

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Dennis Bianchi & Associates, LLC
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Doug Abbott
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Gene Butler
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Mountain Kids
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Pretty Nice Creations
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Action Programs for Animals
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Richard Jennings
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Risana Zaxus
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Steven Bradley
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Sylvia Bustillos
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MMJ's Pawn and Trader Man Pawn
Las Cruces

Taylor Selby
Affordable Solar
Santa Fe

Thomas R. (Bob) Pennington
Agua Fria Nursery, Inc.
Santa Fe

Tom Blankenhorn
Taos County Commissionre
El Prado

Tom Frouge
Avokado Artists
Placitas

Tom Ribe
Great Southwest Adventures
Santa Fe

Trip Rothschild
Rothschild Consulting
Santa Fe

Vaughn Dearing
Gro-West Property Services
Arroyo Seco

Vicki Pozzebon
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Vincent Gutschick
Las Cruces Academy
Las Cruces

Stephanie Preciado
Reviver Printing
Las Cruces

Lauren Bjorkman
Author
Taos

Rafael Gomez
Red Pueblo Works
Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo

January 11, 2017

Congressman Ryan Zinke
U.S. House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Honorable Interior Secretary Nominee Ryan Zinke,

As leaders of faith, we write to express our support for New Mexico's national monuments and to encourage you to continue to protect America's public lands.

As the Psalms remind us, "the Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24). We hold the earth in sacred trust and are called to be responsible stewards of God's creation. As God's faithful tenants, we are called to live in right relationship with creation and to develop responsible attitudes, behaviors and practices to how we use the earth's land, water, and natural resources. As we care for God's creation, we also affirm that creation cares for us. Indeed, with grateful hearts, we acknowledge that the gift of our public lands help sustain our livelihood by providing us with clean air, water, wildlife and recreational opportunities. Through America's public lands we encounter not only the beauty of creation and the majesty of the creator, but also acknowledge that our public lands provide everyone--whether rich or poor--with the opportunity to experience the wonder, joy, silence, solitude, and healing power of God's creation.

As the "Land of Enchantment," New Mexico is blessed with a rich and diverse tapestry of history, culture, and sacred traditions that are rooted in the land and God's creation. We are all owners — and keepers (Gen 2:15)— of this unique, rugged, beautiful and spiritual place. A place that's home to our families, our history and our collective spirituality. No place in New Mexico represents the unique and sacred intersection between history, culture, spirituality and land more than the recently designated Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks national monuments. As faith leaders, we acknowledge that these national monuments are invaluable to our state's history, culture and religious identity.

Located in northern New Mexico, the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument contains the incredible Rio Grande Gorge that will leave one truly humbled and in awe of God's creation. As one of America's most iconic landscapes, the Rio Grande del Norte is an important wildlife corridor and contains various sacred sites representing the rich and diverse history of New Mexico: from pre-contact Native American cultural and archaeological sites to Spanish, Mexican, and American settlement. Some of New Mexico's oldest churches are located in the area and hundreds of petroglyphs, dating from pre-contact time and the Spanish colonial era, can be found in the monument as well as the area contains numerous irreplaceable Native American cultural, religious and sacred sites.

As an area of profound historical, archaeological, and environmental significance, the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument contains the incredible biodiversity of the Chihuahuan Desert wild lands. With unique cultural sites and Native American petroglyphs important to New Mexican and American history, the area also offers ample opportunities for individuals and communities to explore the spirituality, solitude and beauty of the high desert.

Whether prayerfully meditating at the edge of the Rio Grande Gorge, mindfully hiking the Organ Mountains, contemplating while fly-fishing the Red River, or giving gratitude for the diversity of God's creation while observing New Mexico's wildlife, the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ

Mountains Desert Peaks national monuments provide an incredible environment for solitude, self-reflection and to grow in communion with oneself, God, others and all of creation.

Thanks to the designation of these national monuments under the Antiquities Act, local faith communities and tribes continue to access and use these sacred lands as they have for generations. Whether gathering herbs, interpreting petroglyphs, collecting firewood, picking piñon nuts, grazing, hiking, fishing, hunting or prayerfully meditating on the beauty of God's creation, protecting the monument designations for the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks will continue to safeguard New Mexico's and America's rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

As leaders of faith and stewards of God's creation, we urge you to work to ensure the continued existence of, funding for, and access to America's public lands and not allow efforts to rollback or shrink these national monuments to succeed.

With Gratitude,

Rev. Andrew Douglas Black

First Presbyterian Church Santa Fe, NM
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Kristi Koppel

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Evangelical
Lutheran Church of America, Alamogordo, NM

Rabbi Larry Karol (Reform)

Las Cruces, NM

The Very Rev. John Bethancourt

Pastor, Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Santa Fe, NM

Sister Rose Marie Cecchini, MM

Office of Life, Justice, Peace and Creation
Stewardship, Gallup, NM

Rabbi Paul J. Citrin

Taos Jewish Center

Rev. Kay Huggins

Interim Executive Director, New Mexico
Conference of Churches

Rabbi Neil Amswych

Temple Beth Shalom, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Dr. Stephen J. Miller

Pastor, Disciples of Christ Albuquerque, NM

Rev. Lorelei Kay

Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church
Gallup, NM

Dr. W. Bruce Wilder

Senior Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church
Albuquerque, NM

Sister Joan Brown, OSF

New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light
Albuquerque, NM

Rev. Virginia Bairby

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Taos, NM

The Reverend Father Christopher McLaren

Rector, St. Mark's Episcopal Church,
Albuquerque, NM

Rev. H. Blaine Wimberly

Pastor, Zia United Methodist Church, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Dr. Holly Beaumont

Interfaith Worker Justice – New Mexico

Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

General Secretary Emeritus, Reformed
Church in America, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. William G. Thompson

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Rev. Dr. Harry W. Eberts III

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church Santa Fe

Rev. Talitha Arnold

Senior Minister, United Church of Santa Fe,
United Church of Christ (UCC)

Rev. Karen D. Thompson
Christ Lutheran Church, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Seth Finch
Pastor, Covenant Presbyterian Church,
Albuquerque, NM (PCUSA)

Todd Wynward
Mennonite Minister for Watershed Discipleship
Taos, NM

Rev. Dr. Kathryn Johnson Cameron
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Sister Marlene Perrotte, RSM
Mercy Sister, Albuquerque, NM

The Rev. Cannon Stephen Caldwell
Albuquerque, Episcopal Church

Rev. Richard C. Rowe
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Dr. Bert Scott
United Methodist Clergy

Rev. James M. Collie
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Ruling Elder John D. Pasch
First Presbyterian Church Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Sue Joiner
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Albuquerque, NM

Rev. Dr. Georgiana Kugle
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Ruling Elder Mary Jo Lundy
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rabbi Nahum Ward-Lev
Scholar-in-Residence Temple Beth Shalom

Rev. Tiffany Curtis
Pastor, First Christian Church, Disciples of
Christ, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. James D. Brown
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Richard Stafford
Pastor, United Church of Angel Fire, NM

Rev. Gail Lindsay Marriner
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa
Fe, NM

Rev. Sylvia Miller-Mutia
Rector, St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal
Church, Albuquerque, NM

Deacon Lynn Anner-Bolieu
Episcopal Church of Navajoland, ECUSA

Rev. Catherine Volland
St. Bede's Episcopal Church, Santa Fe, NM

Rev. Frank Yates
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Bill Bright
Member Baha'i Faith, Gallup, NM

Ruling Elder Anne Bateman Noss
First Presbyterian Church Santa Fe (PCUSA)

Rev. Dr. Antonio (Tony) Aja
Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Santa Fe

Rev. Elizabeth McMaster
Unitarian Universalist, Albuquerque, NM

Rev. Dr. Robert Woodruff
Pastor, Second Presbyterian Church,
Albuquerque, NM

Rev. Dr. Georgia Ortiz
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Michael Buttram
United Church of Santa Fe, UCC

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Presbyterian Church (USA)

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Rev. Dean Lewis
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Rev. Janet Norden
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Rev. Marie Stockton
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CC: U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM)
U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (NM)
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK)
U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (WA)



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January 13, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
U.S. House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative and Interior Secretary Nominee Zinke:

The undersigned representatives of the New Mexico sporting community write to you to express support for our national monuments and to encourage you to continue to protect public lands as you have throughout your career. Here in New Mexico, sportsmen and women and all who love the outdoors rallied in support for decades prior to the actual designation of Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks national monuments. We now use them to this day to hunt, fish, and recreate in and know with pride that these lands will be used in the same way by our children's children.

Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks both have historic, widespread support from local communities and are premier places to hunt and fish. According to the Bureau of Land Management, overall visitation to Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks grew by 102 percent between 2015 and 2016. Overall, the tourism industry had the largest economic impact in New Mexico's history for the sixth straight year in 2016 - this generated an additional \$6.3 billion for our economy and supported 90,400 jobs. These monuments had widespread support from sportsmen and businesses, a [full report is available here](#).

For sportsmen and women, these national monuments are priceless. In the north, Rio Grande del Norte provides critical habitat for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep. There are 66 miles of the state's finest wild trout water within the monument's boundaries.

In Organ Mountains Desert Peaks, quail, mule deer, javelina, and doves all thrive and give people from all over the state - and beyond - the opportunity to hunt in this unique setting. As a sportsman yourself, we're sure you understand the value of having these lands available to all Americans to hunt and fish.

By designating these national monuments under the Antiquities Act, local communities are able to utilize the land as they have for generations. Whether hunting, fishing, collecting firewood, grazing, or piñon picking, monument designation has protected our shared cultural heritage.

As sportsmen and women, we encourage you to protect our public lands in New Mexico and throughout the country, fight for access and funding, and reject calls to sell off our national public lands and reverse or weaken national monument protections.

Signed,

Garrett Veneklasen
Executive Director
New Mexico Wildlife Federation
Albuquerque, NM

Nick Streit
Taos Fly Shop
Taos, NM

Ivan Valdez
The Reel Life
Santa Fe, NM

Art Vollmer
Executive Director
Trout Unlimited

Gabe Vasquez
Latino Outdoors
Las Cruces, NM

Tony Popp
President
Dona Ana County Associated Sportsmen
Las Cruces, NM

Jim Bates
John Cornell
Co-Chairs
Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen
New Mexico

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
New Mexico

CC: U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM)
U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (NM)
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK)
U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (WA)



January 13, 2017

Congressman Ryan Zinke
U.S. House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Honorable Interior Secretary Nominee Ryan Zinke,

New Mexico has an incredible military history and a tradition of being home to a large veteran community. Armed forces service members come to military installations here like White Sands Missile Range and Kirtland Airforce Base and discover our state's rich opportunities for exploring the outdoors. Many veterans stay and make New Mexico their home because the state makes it a priority to conserve these natural treasures.

Veterans seek public lands as a place to recover from the stress of military experience and challenge themselves to overcome injuries. It is a place our warriors can reconnect with family and friends after long deployments without interference with modern distractions. Studies show that outdoor experiences improve recovery time of veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

That is why veterans played an important role in the diverse coalitions to protect Organ Mountain Desert Peaks (OMDP) and Rio Grande del Norte (RGDN) national monuments. In addition to being rich in culture and history, these landscapes offer a great range of recreation opportunities like rock climbing, rafting, hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, and camping. Veterans can adventure in the majestic spires of OMDP knowing that the history of Geronimo and Billy the Kid is preserved. We can run the Rio Grande in RGDN knowing that the watershed and critical wildlife are protected.

When we joined the service and took an oath to protect our country, it included our public lands, including national monuments. There is no better example of "land of the free" than our public lands. It is not surprising that another military veteran, President Theodore Roosevelt, signed into law the Antiquities Act to make sure our future leaders had the power to preserve these important wild spaces. Our citizens know that despite any dysfunction on Capitol Hill, the President will always be able to step in and protect our community's interest. That is why President Obama stepped in to conserve OMDP and RGDN after an overwhelming effort by New Mexico citizens from all walks of life.

Our New Mexico veteran community asks you now to be a defender of our wild spaces. Please ensure the continued existence, funding, and access to our national monuments. Be vigilant in stopping efforts to roll back the monuments we currently enjoy or reduce their size. Oppose efforts to weaken the Antiquities Act so future presidents retain the ability to act in the best interest of our communities.

Thank you for your time and your leadership managing our public lands.

Sincerely,

New Mexico Veterans

Bernie K. Digman
Las Cruces, NM

Kristan Grigsby
Albuquerque, NM

Dean Palma
Las Cruces, NM

Gene Sisneros
Raton, NM

Markus Podell
Angel Fire, NM

Eric Gonzales
Santa Fe, NM

John Tischhauser
Albuquerque, NM

Sheila Cooper
Albuquerque, NM

Kenneth Mayers
Santa Fe, NM

Michael Bankson
Truth or Consequences, NM

Henry Rosoff
Albuquerque, NM

Joseph Callan
Albuquerque, NM

Harvey, Rosen
Santa Fe, NM

Carl Hitchens

Placitas, NM

Chilton Gregory
Albuquerque, NM

Robert Rosas
Albuquerque, NM

Wallace Wilhoit Jr
Santa Fe, NM

Carol Kain
Albuquerque, NM

Lecia Cornett
Albuquerque, NM

Howard Feder
Rio Rancho, NM

Marianne Lappin
Las Cruces, NM

Jack Clark
Lamy, NM

Kay Hicks
Albuquerque, NM

John Turnbull
Santa Fe, NM

Michael Ripberger
Los Lunas, NM

Rosemarie Gonzales Nielsen
Santa Fe, NM

Bob Hayes
Socorro, NM

Robert Wedemeier
Deming, NM

William Swinney
Santa Fe, NM

Dick Hogle

Espanola, NM

Donald Fletter
Las Cruces, NM

Susan Kutz
Las Cruces, NM

Joseph Bova
Santa Fe, NM

Lari Howell
Albuquerque, NM

Philip West
Carlsbad, NM

Johnny Reed
San Lorenzo, NM

Michael Bracamonte
Tijeras, NM

Patrick McNulty
Alto, NM

Cliff Evans
Albuquerque, NM

Madison Morgan
Las Cruces, NM

Richard Orona
Deming, NM

Patricia Hannigan
Ranchos de Taos, NM

Vaughn Risher
Albuquerque, NM

Randall Houghton
Rio Rancho, NM

Paul Conrow
Albuquerque, NM

Ralph Varner

Rio Rancho, NM

Robert Wells
Roswell, NM

Gary Halpin
Las Vegas, NM

Richard Lindeborg
Las Vegas, NM

Chuck Anthony
Albuquerque, NM

Mitch Buszek
Santa Fe, NM

Peter Berardo
Jemez Springs, NM

Michael Lawler
Albuquerque, NM

Chris Calvert
Santa Fe, NM

Thomas Buckley
Albuquerque, NM

Richard Steele
Albuquerque, NM

Leslie Piper
Las Cruces, NM

Derek Wheeler
Albuquerque, NM

Bobby Sammons
Cloudcroft, NM

Virginia Frohlick
Albuquerque, NM

Edward Wallhagen
Albuquerque, NM

Frank Gibbons

Santa Fe, NM

Dennett Grover
Alto, NM

Michelle James
Albuquerque, NM

Lawrence Sager
Cerrillos, NM

John Kutinac
Las Cruces, NM

Penn Baker
Cedar Crest, NM

CC:

U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM)

U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (NM)

Senate Natural Resource Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski (AK)

Senate Natural Resource Committee Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (WA)

Senator HEINRICH. The Antiquities Act is the law of the land, and communities in New Mexico are already in the process of developing management plans for those monuments. Will you simply commit to working in good faith with these gateway communities, including tribal communities, to make sure that these monuments are a success, or some might say even to make sure that these monuments are great?

Mr. ZINKE. I will absolutely commit to working with you. There are some monuments that are more controversial than others.

I think a monument, when it falls in a state, I think the state should have a say on it. To me, I have always kind of considered monuments, as I drive across Montana, a pretty big state, between here and Chicago plus 2 miles, when you see a sign that says "monument," generally I have always envisioned it as a battlefield, a location that deserves special recognition.

Larger monuments that are millions of acres that do not have support of the community, there is no doubt the President has the authority to amend a monument. It is always in the papers. It will be interesting to see whether the President has the authority to nullify a monument.

But, certainly, my counsel will be—

Senator HEINRICH. What is your view on that?

Mr. ZINKE. Legally, it is untested on it. What I would prefer is, again, to work in a collaborative effort with the states. If the states like their monuments—and we have talked a great—in the State of Maine on it. And if the state is comfortable with the monument as it is, and they have a management plan, I think we should work with the state and be an advocate. If a state is upset about a monument, they had a plan that is different from what was done, then I think we should defer a lot of that to the state.

Senator HEINRICH. Can you point to a sentence within the Antiquities Act, which as you know is very short, that authorizes rescinding a monument?

Mr. ZINKE. There is no statement that authorizes rescinding. And that is—I am not an attorney, thank God.

Senator HEINRICH. That makes two of us. I would think that we are both grateful, and our constituents probably are, too.

Mr. ZINKE. I would think that if the President would nullify a monument, it would be challenged, and then a court would determine whether or not the legal framework allows it or not.

I would hope the right path, if we work with the states where that monument is—and I think we all have benefited from a lot of our monuments. Certainly, in Montana, the Battlefield of Little Big Horn has been enormously important to the State of Montana and the Crow Nation, and they are very happy with it, although it needs some work.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Congressman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Alexander.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thanks, Madam Chairman.

Congressman Zinke, and to your family, welcome. I am impressed with your record of service, and with you and your views, and I look forward to supporting you. I think you have a chance to be a terrific Secretary of the Interior.

Thirty-two years ago, President Reagan asked me to head up something called the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, and we worked on it for two years looking ahead for a generation to see what our outdoor recreation opportunities should be.

The main one conclusion I came to was that there ought to be one policy for the West and one policy for the East, because there are so many any differences. This committee is filled with westerners, so let me give you a little bit of an eastern perspective from my side. We do not have much Federal land in Tennessee and North Carolina, and we like what we have.

One area that I would ask you is, in the newspaper today, the National Park Service has established a panel to review the devastating Chimney Tops fire we had in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park so we can learn from it, if there are any lessons to prevent such a thing. It is unexpected for us. We are not used to that. We have 80 inches of rain a year. This fire started on Chimney Tops and a hurricane blew it in and nearly burned up half of Gatlinburg. Will you commit to pay close attention yourself to that review so that we can see if there are any lessons to be learned for the future?

Mr. ZINKE. Senator, I will absolutely commit to that. I think it is important. I have been to that beautiful park, and have been to Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, and it is a wonderful place and a special place in America. And I am glad it is a park.

I will work with you to make sure we figure out what the road work, the best path is forward on making sure that incidents like that do not happen again.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you very much. I am very impressed with the heroism, really, of those who responded to it, but they too want to know what we can do better.

Now, on the Smokies, the difference between the Smokies and Yellowstone or Glacier in your territory is that land was already owned by the United States. The Smokies were bought by the people of Tennessee and North Carolina and given to the national park.

And the other difference is we have a lot more visitors because of our location, twice as many, for example, as Yellowstone, which is such a prized place. Yet, our funding, our appropriation for Yellowstone is more than twice the total funding for the Smokies. And because of the restrictions that were established when people gave it to the Federal Government, we cannot charge an entrance fee, so we have a lot less money to deal with a lot more people.

Will you, during your time, take a careful look at the allocation of funding between the Smokies and the other parks to try to make sure that our most visited national park gets its fair share of funding?

Mr. ZINKE. Senator, we talked about this in your office. And, yes, I think we need to look at the formula. Clearly it—again, the Smokies are different than other parks. It should be recognized that, again, working forward with this committee on the infrastructure bill, we are hoping we can take a big bite out of deferred maintenance on infrastructure. There are a number of roads and facilities in there.

But if we are \$12.5 billion behind in our parks, certainly, we as a great nation can do better. And it is going to take this committee's guidance, with the Chairman's leadership, to make sure that that infrastructure is part of the package.

Senator ALEXANDER. My last question has to do with the recommendations on the Commission on the Americans Outdoors 32 years ago. We reaffirmed the recommendation of the earlier Rockefeller Commission on the Land and Water Conservation Fund, so I hope you will count me in along with other Senators here in wanting to help you help to find a way to permanently authorize that. It makes a lot of sense to take money from oil and gas exploration, a burden on the environment, and use it for a benefit for the environment. It has made sense since the 1960s.

The problem is, we have a \$20 billion backlog that, because of our rules, we have not appropriated. So it is important to do that.

We have found 30 years ago that 80 percent—most outdoor recreation occurs near where we live, and that about 80 percent of us live near city parks, not near Yellowstone or Glacier or the Smokies, as we were privileged to grow up. And that is the importance of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Another important set of recommendations had to do with land trust, greenways and scenic byways, all of which were state and local, not Federal. So will you use this opportunity to look ahead to another generation and ask the question: What outdoor recreation opportunities will our children and grandchildren have?

I think you are in a wonderful position to do a follow-up to the Commission on Americans Outdoors. This is the 30th anniversary of that report, and a generation has passed, and it is time for the next look.

Mr. ZINKE. Which brings up a smaller point about the next generation of millennials. We have to motivate and incentivize outdoor activities to teach our millennials the importance of the great outdoors.

If you look at the numbers, and the demographics are actually a little different. The people that are visiting the parks are the older generations. So we have to look at new ways of incentivizing younger millennials to experience the parks, to experience the outdoors, to teach them the value of our public lands.

So that is a concern, just looking at numbers for how do we get our kids out there enjoying the great outdoors? In many cases, I would argue it is better than being in front of the TV watching video games.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely.

Senator Duckworth.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Congressman, welcome.

In 2013, Mr. Trump tweeted on the issue of military sexual assault by blaming the women who served, and he said in his tweet: 26,000 unreported sexual assaults in the military, only 230 convictions. What do these geniuses expect when they put men and women together?

Then later in 2016, at the Commander-in-Chief Forum, he defended that tweet and said: "Well, it is a correct tweet, and there are many people that think that is absolutely correct."

Following that Commander-in-Chief tweet, that Commander-in-Chief Forum tweet, you put out a statement of praise for Mr. Trump and at no point did you call him out on that tweet, at no point did you call on him to apologize for that tweet.

I wonder, as someone who is about to take charge of a major Federal agency with both men and women serving, sometimes in extremely rugged conditions, as our rangers do, I wonder what that says to the employees of our National Park Service?

You in fact even more recently defended the President-elect's bragging about his own commitment of sexual assault by dismissing it as locker room talk. And you are now nominated to oversee the National Park Service, which currently has a major sexual harassment problem that the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which I used to sit on, has been investigating on a bipartisan basis.

If confirmed, how can we be sure that you just will not look the other way in dealing with this issue of sexual assault at the National Park Service like you did with your own potential boss, the President-elect?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, thank you for the question.

I take issues of sexual assault and harassment absolutely seriously. As you know, as a military commander, the tolerance is zero.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Have you had a conversation with the President-elect about his statements?

Mr. ZINKE. No, Senator, I have not. But I have had conversations about the Park Service, and there are problems in the Park Service. There are problems with sexual harassment. There are problems with morale.

If you look at the Park Service, I mean, who would not want to be a ranger? Historically, the job of a ranger in the Park Service has been one of the top positions as far as employee satisfaction. Today, they rank at the bottom.

Now, something is going on, whether it is sexual harassment that has an influence on it, whether they feel like they do not have the flexibility to make decisions, whether they feel there are a lot of reasons. But I have to get to the bottom of it, because it is the frontline.

You served, and thank you for your service. You served and you understand that if the morale is bad at the frontline, it makes sure that mission success is not going to happen. And sexual harassment is part of what is killing morale, I believe.

But I am going to go out on the frontline and talk and listen to what is happening because it is, one, on the sexual harassment issue, they have to know from leadership, from the top and the bottom, that we have zero tolerance.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Can you describe a little bit what you will do beyond listening, what type of policies you would put into place? I have some concerns because you have a history of being willing to participate in gimmicks.

In fact, you cosponsored legislation with Congressman Duncan Hunter to require women to register for the draft despite not supporting it yourself because you wanted to send a gimmicky message that actually backfired on you, and that bill actually passed and it

was—the Republican House leadership had to come to your rescue and pull that out of a conference report on the NDAA.

I am concerned because you yourself have a history of saying that women who served in combat provide a distraction and it weakens the force. In that debate, I was there that night. I think we were both there until well after 3 a.m. You said that the enemy do not recognize men and women in uniform, they recognize weaknesses; talking about women and men serving together in combat.

You know, again, men and women serve in very rugged conditions in the National Park Service, and I just worry that you, with a history of being willing to participate in what the Montana Defense Alliance called a reckless piece of legislation, this gimmicky bill that you passed that backfired on you, what you are going to do when you lead Federal employees at the National Park Service?

Mr. ZINKE. I think the topic of women serving in the military and signing up for Selective Service is not a gimmick. So I would say that is a mischaracterization of the importance of the issue.

Senator DUCKWORTH. But you did introduce a bill that you did not support.

Mr. ZINKE. Because I think it is important for America to have that discussion. And during that period, every table around Montana was talking about it. So I do not think it is a gimmick to talk about, in open discussion, whether or not women should be part of the Selective Service.

My daughter is a Navy diver, and I have served in combat with women. Everyone has a role, as you know. The roles are—

Senator DUCKWORTH. Do think that women serving at the frontlines of the Park Service weaken that force?

Mr. ZINKE. Not at all. I think everyone should have the same respect. I think there are jobs that are different. Within the Park Service, there are women that I think assume every role. I think that is an opportunity that has been given to women long before—I am not sure when, but a long time. I think we should be comfortable with that. I certainly am.

And the issue of gimmicks, again, I do not—as a matter of fact, I take offense that discussion about Selective Service is a gimmick. I think it deserved our vote, and it deserved a discussion.

Senator DUCKWORTH. I think that the way you introduced the bill was—

The CHAIRMAN. The Senator's time has expired.

Senator Lee.

Senator LEE. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Congressman, for being here. Thanks for your service to our country. We appreciate all that you have done to protect us, to keep us safe.

I agree with what one of my colleagues, Senator Alexander, said a minute ago, that public land issues are often very different. When you ask people from different states, the reaction they might have might differ depending on what part of the country they come from. Those who are east of the Mississippi are likely to feel a little bit differently than those west of the Mississippi.

There is reason for this. There are a lot of reasons, but one, in particular, has to do with the fact that, of this land that the Federal Government owns, we are talking roughly 30 percent of the

land mass in the United States, the overwhelming majority of the Federal land is in the Western United States. It affects many in the Western United States in a very real, very personal way. Very often, it is the poor and middle class who bear the greatest burden associated with mismanagement and overreach, when it comes to our Federal land.

For this reason, the seemingly limitless power granted to the President of the United States under the Antiquities Act is particularly troubling to some of us. With the stroke of his executive pen, the President of the United States can upend communities, can change traditional ways of life, change even religious practices and lock up hundreds of thousands of acres of land with one action, in some cases, over a million acres.

So to begin, I want to ask you the same question that I asked the person who would be your predecessor, if you are confirmed, Sally Jewell, currently serving as Secretary of the Interior. Do you view local support as a necessary precondition—a condition precedent—we might say, to the creation of a national monument under the Antiquities Act?

Mr. ZINKE. I view it as absolutely critical to have state and local support on the monument that they participate in.

In the case of Salt Lake or Utah, I am concerned about the schools and the funding mechanism that the schools are—that has been largely taken away, as I understand, so that is a concern.

But if you start at the local community level, at the grassroots, and you build, and there is participation, then we get ahead of the problem. As a former military officer, you plan, and planning prevents a lot of miscues in execution. Part of the planning process is go out, get community support, make sure your Governor and your elected leaders are behind you. And then petition, talk to the President, who makes the decision. And everyone should be on the same page or at least about on the same page.

Senator LEE. I appreciate that, and I hope, Congressman, that if you are confirmed to this position, that one of the first things you will do is come to Utah. I encourage you to talk to some of the people who have been affected by the monument designation by the President on December 28th, when he designated 1.53 million acres in southeast Utah in San Juan County, our State's poorest county, against the overwhelming opposition of the local population of San Juan County, against the opposition of all six members of our State's congressional delegation, against the opposition of our Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, all of our statewide elected officials within the State of Utah. I think what you are going to hear from them is, please, Mr. Secretary, do something about this.

So, Congressman, if you are confirmed, will you consider visiting Utah and talking to the people affected by this monument designation, and based on what you hear from the affected population, consider having a conversation with President Trump about revisiting this unfortunate step?

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you for the question. I am absolutely committed to restoring trust. If confirmed, I have committed to go out to Utah first and talk to the Governor, talk to people on the

ground, and come back and make a recommendation to the President on that. I think that is important.

Senator LEE. Thank you.

Mr. ZINKE. I am going to be a very busy guy. I am going to go out to the State of Washington. I am going to go out to Alaska. I think I have committed to going everywhere, so I am going to be remote. This is going to be a deployment. I apologize to my wife in advance, but I will be gone a lot.

Senator LEE. Thank you, and thank you for your willingness to do that.

I have seconds left, so I will have to forgo the rest of my questions. But I do want to say, in closing, I appreciate you visiting with me about this. I want to point out that there is nothing in the Antiquities Act that prohibits revisiting.

I also want to point out there is a distinction between talking about who should own and manage public land, those close to it or those thousands of miles away from it, and, on the other hand, suggesting that ExxonMobil should set up a drilling rig underneath Delicate Arch. That is a strawman argument and not one that anyone that I know of raising this issue wants to advance.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Stabenow.

Senator STABENOW. Thank you, Madam Chair, and welcome, Congressman.

First, let me just echo concerns that Senator Duckworth said about what is happening, in terms of sexual in-office harassment. These are very serious. I hope, in addition to listening, you will create a work environment so that victims will be willing to come forward without fear of retaliation, because we are hearing very, very serious things related to this.

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, ma'am. You have my absolute commitment. I do take it seriously.

The work environment is incredible. And we have—you know, there are 70,000 professional men and women within the Department of the Interior. When you walk in the door in the morning, you should absolutely have the right expectation of a work environment that is conducive to success. If there is a culture of sexual harassment, that is just flat wrong, and I am going to stamp it out, if confirmed.

Senator STABENOW. We are going to hold you to that.

Let me switch and, not a surprise, talk about water from a different standpoint. In Michigan, we have a lot of it around us, and we like that. We are very concerned about water quality, and certainly, water relates to our economy in very, very big ways.

In fact, not just in Michigan but we have actually four of us on the committee, Senator Portman, Senator Franken, Senator Duckworth, and I, who all represent 20 percent of the world's freshwater, and these are very serious issues for us.

So when we look at, and you and I talked about this in my office, various threats to the Great Lakes, one of the big ones relates to what is happening in terms of invasive species, including this big 100-pound fish with no functioning stomach that is something of great concern to us.

So if confirmed, will you commit to advocating for the necessary funding for programs and agencies at Interior, like Fish and Wildlife Service, Geological Survey, that is critical to early detection, prevention, and control of invasive species?

Mr. ZINKE. I will absolutely commit to the right for clean water and checking the invasive species. I understand it in Michigan.

After our conversation, I had the opportunity to look at it in more detail. It is a threat. I got the message, and it is a threat. Having a 100-pound carp jump out of the water and hit you is a big issue, and to make sure that we isolate, eliminate and control it. Invasive species is a problem all the way into Hawaii.

Senator STABENOW. Sure.

Mr. ZINKE. But we do need to shore up, and part of the President's infrastructure bill I think is looking at that, on our water networks. And part of redoing our water, to make sure, one, our water is clean, it is abundant and make sure we protect our watersheds in our different areas, to make sure that invasive species are part of those programs.

Senator STABENOW. Well, and Interior has played an important role in a partnership. When you talk about partnerships with agencies, we have had every agency, every department that in any way touches on this issue, working together for a number of years now, and laser-focused on the question of Asian carp as well as other invasive species.

We have a \$7 billion recreational and commercial fishing industry, a \$14 billion boating industry. So this is critical for us.

One of the other areas that is very important in terms of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Geological Survey working together with state and local fisheries and natural resource managers relates to sharing scientific information. You have talked about working with states, working with local communities. These are very, very important areas, and we want decisions made based on science about what is really happening. As we look at scientific information being shared, if confirmed, will you commit to advocating for funding levels that ensure that the availability and exchange of critical scientific information, without regard to political or philosophical ideology—we need to be focused on science when we look at how to address these issues.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, yes, I will, because management decisions should be based on objective science. As a geologist, that is step one, is you need to know the numbers. If you are going to manage an endangered species, what are our numbers that we should have, that we strive to?

Having objective science—and part of the good thing about the job, if confirmed, is I do have a lot of very, very talented people within the Interior Department that are objective, that want to do the right thing, that want to share information. And I want to make sure that we do coordinate and open up the channels between the different agencies and public and private institutions that have a lot of talent, too.

There are a lot of people working on these things, but just like the Intelligence Community that I am more familiar with, sometimes we get stovepiped, and sometimes the information-sharing is not as it should be.

Senator STABENOW. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BARRASSO.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Representative Zinke, congratulations on your nomination. I look forward to working with you. As a westerner, I believe you have a unique understanding of the gravity of the position that you have been nominated to fill.

The Department of the Interior is tasked with managing an incredible amount of acreage, thousands of species, countless water resources. Thanks for coming to visit with me about this before the hearing.

As we have discussed, the Obama Administration has used the Department of the Interior as a department of preservation, locking up lands with the goal of preserving them as if they existed in a vacuum. I believe these bad policies have damaged landscapes, have failed to protect dangerously imperiled species and disenfranchised the people who I believe are most invested in the good stewardship of our resources, the people that live on the land. So I look forward to you and your new approach, and the new approach of the incoming Administration.

The war on coal, it is real for communities across the West, including Wyoming and Montana. It has devastated small towns and ultimately threatens our country's energy security. If confirmed, will you commit to ending this moratorium on Federal coal leasing?

Mr. ZINKE. The war on coal I believe is real. I have Decker, Montana in my area, and behind me is a gentleman who works in the coal mines of the Crow Agency, which, by the way, the Crow Agency, if you were to take coal out of the picture, the unemployment rate would probably be in the 90 percent range. So they are very keen on making sure they have their jobs, and we give them the ability for self-determination.

The moratorium, I think, was an example of many that is a one-size-fits-all. It was a view from Washington, not a view from the states, particularly if you are a state such as Wyoming and parts of Montana, West Virginia, where coal is important.

So overall, the President-elect has made a commitment to end "the war on coal." I think we should be smart on how we approach our energy. All-of-the-above is a correct policy. Coal is certainly a great part of our energy mix.

To your point, I am also a great believer that we should invest in the research and development, particularly on coal, because we know we have the asset. Let us work together to make it cleaner, better. We should be leading the world in clean energy technology, and I am pretty confident that coal can be a part of that.

But it is about science. It is about investing in our future and not looking at our past.

Senator BARRASSO. With the use of the Congressional Review Act, I am planning on introducing a disapproval resolution on the BLM's venting and flaring rule. To me, that rule far exceeds the authority of the BLM. It will ultimately put Federal lands at even greater competitive disadvantage to state and private lands. Will you support our efforts to reverse this rule under the Congressional Review Act?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, and I think what the driving force is, is we are venting a lot, and we are wasting energy. And that is troubling to me. The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields.

So a lot of the wasting can be approached by having an infrastructure. So let us build a system where we capture that energy that is otherwise being wasted. And that is an enormous opportunity. It is an enormous opportunity for our natural gas and geopolitically as well.

You know, we have not talked a lot about overseas, but energy is so critically important. If we want to check Russia, then let us do it with liquid natural gas. If we want to put pressure on Iran, let us supplant every drop of Iranian crude.

This is all part of a larger package, and it cannot be done without the great State of Wyoming and their assets, or Alaska. But we have to think globally on it. I have said this once before, but it is better to produce energy in America under reasonable regulation and get better over time than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. That is indisputable.

Senator BARRASSO. The final question, I want to talk about sage grouse management plans. The Administration has ignored input from key stakeholders, including Western Governors, during the development of their plans, plans which were used to justify what they called non-warranted status under the Endangered Species Act. But at the core, the plans fundamentally opposed the multiple use mandates of the BLM, which includes grazing, recreation, energy development. Will you commit to returning conservation management authority of the sage grouse back to the states and preventing top-down mandates like this in the future?

Mr. ZINKE. My understanding is the sage grouse decision is going to come before the Department of the Interior sometime in March. I understand there are going to be options and alternatives, proposed alternatives. I will work with you when I see those documents. I will work with all of you when I see those documents to make sure we are doing the right thing.

What concerns me about sage grouse is there is no target number. I am not sure how you can manage without a number. So if we just grab on management of property without a number, I look at that with a suspect eye.

I think we have to look at, everyone loves sage grouse. Everyone understands that we have to protect the species. Generally, those who live on the ground are better positioned, and we should be an advocate and a partner in this, rather than heavy-handed and just dictate terms, particularly when we do not have a number.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Wyden, who has been very patient. Thank you.

Senator WYDEN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Congressman, as a fellow Oregon Duck——

Mr. ZINKE. Go Ducks. It is a rough season, sir.

Senator WYDEN. Watch basketball.

I appreciated the visit in the office. As we talked about, when you go into a small Western town today and you head to the coffee shop, where it seems most of the decisions usually get made, you

will now see ranchers and timber mill owners and environmental folks, and they will all be sitting around. And you will ask them what they are doing, and they will mention one word, and this is true all over the West, and that word is "collaboration," because they have decided everybody has just enough clout to block the other side and nothing happens unless they collaborate.

We really set the model for this in this committee with secure rural schools, with our resource advisory committees, and this is really probably what I am more interested in. I remember being on this committee when Chairman Murkowski was getting us involved in these resource issues. Maybe we have some kind of club for ex-chairs of this committee or something, but the point was we started talking about collaboration then.

On this sage-grouse issue, which we are all deeply committed to making sure that there is not a lifting under the Endangered Species Act, we are going to have to have a Federal/State/local collaboration. This is apropos of the question from my friend in Wyoming. I think you just mentioned one of the roles that the Federal Government better play, and that is setting a target.

Now, I have always said when the Federal Government sets a target, and then we say to local folks, you all go do your thing because what works in Roseburg, Oregon or Coos Bay, Oregon may not necessarily work several thousand miles away.

Tell me a little bit about how you are going to approach setting up the Federal/State collaboration on what is one of the biggest, most important collaboration we have seen in years.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, thank you for the question, and I do believe that Oregon Ducks are going to be better. But the collaborative efforts, you have to reward getting together in a collaborative because it takes a lot of resources. It takes time, it takes effort, and the frustration is that you get together—farmers, ranchers, environmental, all stakeholders—and after a two-year venture where they come up with a plan, and there is fighting, and there is discussion, and there is compromise, you come up with a plan, and that plan is ignored, or it is sued multiple times. So we have to incentivize coming together for plans. From the Federal Government, I have been an advocate of empowering the plan based on broad, central goals.

In the case of the sage-grouse—

Senator WYDEN. Like targets.

Mr. ZINKE. Like targets, yes sir, management numbers. What is the goal?

Senator WYDEN. Okay.

Mr. ZINKE. I do not know how you make a management plan unless you have a goal. So the goal needs to be scientifically, objectively based to protect the species, and—

Senator WYDEN. Let us move on to forestry because I like the answer. You laid out that there was a role for the Federal Government as it relates to targets, and I want it understood that I am very much sympathetic to your point and Senator Barrasso's point that we also have to have a strong role for local folks in the states and the like.

Apply it now to forestry where once again we are trying to find a way to get beyond years of gridlock. Now, I have written a pro-

posal for our state. You and I talked about it. It is called the ONC Land. It doubles the harvest in a sustainable way on average each year for decades while protecting our treasures. There are other ways to go about doing it as well. The Oregon delegation is trying to find some common ground.

How do you do it, in your view, without going to sufficiency language, which basically has generated ever since the spotted owl, all the polarization and all the fighting?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, thank you for the question. It is an excellent question. On the House side, we had the Resilient Federal Force Act. What we had hoped would happen was the Senate would pick it up, and then we would work it out between the—on the committees, who would work together and fine tune it because there were parts that neither party liked, but overall it was a pretty good vehicle.

In that bill, it did not exclude any stakeholder in our forests. I am pretty good friends with Chief Tidwell, who is a Region 1 guy. We are 71 million acres behind in removing dead and dying timber. We need to get to it because the goal should be healthy forests so you do not have a catastrophic fire.

Senator WYDEN. Let us do this. Would you furnish that answer to me in writing?

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, sir.

Senator WYDEN. I want to know how we bring about the collaboration without sufficiency language.

I also want to thank you for your support in our bipartisan effort to end fire borrowing, which is this insane budget practice which actually discriminates against preventive forestry. I appreciate your help. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Wyden. Senator Daines.

Senator DAINES. Thank you, Madam Chair. And, Senator Wyden, I echo your comments on collaboration. The other word I hear around tables at coffee shops in Montana besides “collaboration” is “litigation.” We collaborate, and then we have agreements, and then some extreme groups stop it in court. We have got to address this litigation issue, too, if we are going to solve the problem.

Representative Zinke, welcome to the committee. It has been a long path from Boise State in 1979 as two juniors in high school to being here with you. What an honor. Thank you. It is wonderful to see your family here. I could not be a prouder Montanan. In fact, when confirmed, you will be the first Montanan to ever serve in a Cabinet position in United States’ history, going back to our statehood in 1889. So history will be made when you are confirmed.

With you the helm of the Department of the Interior, you are going to be a strong advocate for our public lands and a strong advocate for American energy. You have made that clear here today. And you have been tenacious in working on behalf of Indian Country in the House, representing our 12 Federally-recognized Indian tribes and the Little Shell Tribe. I know you will be committed to bringing prosperity to their communities.

As I say about Montana, we are a unique blend. We are a blend of Merle Haggard and a blend of John Denver—mastering that melody is always a challenge, but it does result in a common sense approach on management of our Federal lands and minerals that

can make our country stronger. I think you have mastered that melody, which is why I think you have secured the support from such a diverse number of sportsmen, of industry, of tribal groups.

There is an impressive list here, Representative Zinke, that is single-spaced, two columns wide, of groups that range from the American Fly Fishing Trade Association, who have written letters in your support, on your behalf, Boone and Crockett Club, the NRA, the Mueller Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. These are just a few of the many on this list, not to mention tribes from across the country—the Confederated Salish and Kootenai, Fort Belknap, the Shakopee, the Choctaw, and the list goes on. That is a tough balance to walk. It is a walk of wisdom, and you have walked it well, sir.

I would like to submit some of these letters to support your nomination on their behalf today to the committee, if I could, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. They are a part of the record.
[The information referred to follows:]

January 12, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the millions of hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and outdoor enthusiasts from all 50 states that our organizations represent, we write today to express our support for Senate confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke's appointment to serve as the 52nd Secretary of the Interior.

Since he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2014, Congressman Zinke has been an active member of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus. In this role, he has shown a strong commitment to working with the sportsmen's community in pursuit of policies that seek a balanced and thoughtful approach to natural resource and public land management. His efforts also highlight the importance of outdoor recreation and recognize the critically important role that America's sportsmen and women play in conserving our nation's fish and wildlife resources.

Given these shared priorities and Congressman Zinke's demonstrated ability to work alongside America's millions of hunters, anglers and other conservationists, we respectfully request that members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources report his nomination to the Senate with a favorable recommendation.

Sincerely,

American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Boone and Crockett Club
Camp Fire Club of America
Cath-A-Dream Foundation
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Conservation Force
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited
Houston Safari Club
Masters of Foxhounds Association
Mule Deer Foundation
National Rifle Association

National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Trappers Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
North American Grouse Partnership
Orion – The Hunter’s Institute
Pheasants Forever
Professional Outfitters and Guides of America
Public Lands Foundation
Pure Fishing
Quail Forever
Quality Deer Management Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Shimano American Corporation
Sportsmen’s Alliance
Texas Wildlife Association
The Conservation Fund
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Whitetails Unlimited
Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Wildlife Mississippi



The voice of fish and wildlife agencies

1100 First Street, N.E., Suite 825
Washington, D.C. 20002
Phone: 202-838-3474
Fax: 202-350-9869
Email: info@fishwildlife.org

January 12, 2017

Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Senator Cantwell:

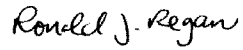
I am writing to express the strong support of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, of which all 50 states are members, for the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke as Secretary of the Interior. It is only through close cooperation between the state fish and wildlife agencies and the federal land and other natural resources agencies that we can succeed in conserving fish, wildlife, and its habitat for the long-term use and enjoyment of our citizens and future generations. We look forward to working closely with Secretary-Nominee Zinke to improve state-federal relationships in order to meet our mutual objectives for the citizens of this Nation.

States are the principal front-line managers of fish and wildlife within their borders, including on most federal lands, and state jurisdiction is concurrent with federal jurisdiction, for example, with species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Both federal lands management and restoration of threatened and endangered species will be major challenges for a new Administration and we believe Congressman Zinke has established himself as a good problem-solver with an enduring commitment to collaborative or partnership-based conservation of our natural resources.

State fish and wildlife agencies are looking forward to working with the Secretary-Nominee, and his leadership team, to bring science-based solutions, informed by public engagement, to the conservation challenges of our day. Indeed, state fish and wildlife agencies will welcome new opportunities for true partner-based management outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Association's strong support of the confirmation of Congressman Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior, and we urge your expeditious and favorable reporting of his confirmation to the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald J. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Ronald J. Regan
Executive Director
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

P.O. Box 1210 • Durant, OK 74702-1210
(580) 924-8280

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin, Jr.
Assistant Chief

January 12, 2017

Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Steve Daines
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke

Dear Madam Chair and Senator Daines:

As Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, I want to convey our strong support for President-elect Trump's nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

We believe Congressman Zinke understands and supports the government-to-government relationship between each Indian tribe and the United States, and we believe he has demonstrated a commitment as Congressman to respecting and protecting tribal sovereignty that is so important to the wellbeing of our tribal Nation.

Over the years, our Nation has worked closely with a number of very able persons who have filled the high office of Interior Secretary. In view of how industriously and respectfully he has worked on behalf of Montana tribes over his past two years in the House, we are confident that Congressman Zinke will meet and exceed the high bar set by his predecessors as Interior Secretary.

We were gratified to read Congressman Zinke's statement accepting the nomination – "Most important, our sovereign Indian Nations and territories must have the respect and freedom they deserve." The Choctaw Nation believes it is this framework that will define how Congressman Zinke carries out his lead role as the federal trustee for Indian tribes and individuals and resources.

For all these reasons, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is pleased to support the nomination of Congressman Zinke to be the next Interior Secretary. We urge the Committee and the U.S. Senate to give his nomination prompt and favorable approval.

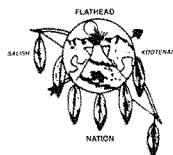
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Batton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being more prominent than the last name "Batton".

Gary Batton, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

GB/tl

cc: Honorable James Inhofe, U.S. Senate
Honorable James Lankford, U.S. Senate



A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION
P.O. BOX 278
Pablo, Montana 59855
(406) 275-2700
FAX (406) 275-2806
www.cskt.org



TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Vernon S. Finley - Chairman
Len Twoteeth - Vice Chair
Troy Felsman - Secretary
Anita Matt - Treasurer
Ronald Trahan
Shelly R. Fyant
Leonard W. Gray
Carole Lankford
Dennis Clairmont
Patty Stevens

January 11, 2017

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes is proud to support the nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke as our next Secretary of Interior. We encourage the Committee to swiftly confirm his nomination. As Montana Senator Steve Daines has appropriately observed, "Commander Zinke is a military hero who served honorably for 23 years and is taking his service to another level." We are confident that Congressman Zinke will ably serve the nation in this new role.

The Department of Interior is responsible for overseeing our natural resources and protecting Indian country. As a Montanan, Congressman Zinke has a lifelong understanding of issues central to the mission of the Department of Interior. The Congressman was raised in western Montana community nestled between the Flathead and Blackfoot Indian Reservations, Glacier National Park, Hungry Horse Dam, and countless wildlife refuges, wilderness areas and other public lands. In both the Montana Legislature and in Congress, Commander Zinke has demonstrated his ability to work with Indian tribes and protect natural resources. Notably, Congressman Zinke worked tirelessly with Montana Senators Tester and Daines to secure the final ratification of the Blackfoot Water Rights Settlement. His personal focus on local control and less bureaucracy is consistent with tribal self-governance and we look forward to working with him on common goals.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are pleased to support Congressman Zinke's nomination and confirmation.

Sincerely,

Vernon S. Finley
Tribal Chairman



FALLON PAIUTE-SHOSHONE TRIBE

January 17, 2017

The Honorable Sen. Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sen. Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Nomination and confirmation of
U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke as U.S. Secretary of the Interior**

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, of Fallon, Nevada would like to express its support of U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke to be the next U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

As a federally recognized Indian Tribe in Nevada, we are aware of Congressman Zinke and his time in the U.S. House of Representatives and, especially his actions on matters regarding tribal sovereignty, land use, economic development and other issues associated with Native American Tribes. He has worked well with Senator Heller and Congressman Amodei, as have we.

Although we do not always agree with Congressman Zinke's public policy positions, we do believe that he is a man of character; an approachable public servant, open to be persuaded when an argument is being made, and who possesses the necessary leadership and management skills to successfully and competently run the important U.S. Department of the Interior. We know we can work with him.

The Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe works extensively with the U.S. Department of the Interior. Currently, we are working with the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Affairs on two land transfers; and with the Bureau of Land Management on repatriation of the Spirit Cave Man remains. We've also taken advantage of the BIA loan guarantee program. Recently we hosted the USDA Western Tribal Economic Development Forum at our Fox Peak Cinema. Each of these Bureaus of DOI are important to our Economic Development Plan.

Our reservation abuts the growing municipality of Fallon, NV and the **Fallon Naval Air Station (NAS Fallon)** which is the United States Navy's premier air-to-air / air-to-ground training facility, and home to the **Naval Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN)**. NAS Fallon is expected to expand over the next several years to train Navy and Marine Corps pilots and aircrews. We are working with NAS Fallon on providing base maintenance services and rental housing.

As our area grows exponentially, economic development for our Tribe will be our number one initiative and we look forward to working with the U.S. Department of the Interior as an encouraging and effective partner as we go through this region's upswing in activity.

We believe that Ryan Zinke at the Interior Department would provide serious leadership.

Sincerely,

Len George, Chairman



Forest County Potawatomi Community

P.O. BOX 340 • Crandon, WI 54520

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL
fortherecord@energy.senate.gov

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Confirmation hearing for Ryan Zinke for the position of Secretary of the Interior

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

As an elected member of the Forest County Potawatomi Community Council and as authorized by the Council, I write in support of Congressman Zinke's nomination for the position of the Secretary of the Interior Department. Congressman Zinke has spent his life serving this country, first as Navy Seal Commander and then as a member of the Montana State Legislature, and finally as a member of the United States House of Representatives. In all of these capacities, Congressman Zinke has served with honor and integrity.

In his capacity as Secretary of the Interior, Congressman Zinke will be the Administration's point person for protecting and exercising the trust responsibility to protect and enhance tribal governments' sovereignty and our trust resources. I have learned from many of the Tribes in Montana that they fully support Congressman Zinke's nomination. They greatly appreciate his work on their behalf, from securing the final passage of the Blackfeet Water settlement in the House to protecting critical drinking water infrastructure at Fort Peck and Rocky Boy. The Forest County Potawatomi Community, greatly appreciates his support of tribal sovereignty in supporting the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act, which clarifies that tribal governments are treated as every other government under the Nation's labor laws.

For these reasons, I support Congressman Zinke's nomination to the position of the Secretary of the Interior and look forward to working with him in that new position.

Sincerely,

James Crawford, Tribal Secretary
Forest County Potawatomi Community

Fort Belknap Indian Community



Fort Belknap Agency
656 Agency Main Street
Harlem, Montana 59526-9455
PH: (406) 353-2205
FAX: Council - (406) 353-4541
FAX: Departments - (406) 353-2797

Fort Belknap Indian Community
(Tribal Govt.)
Fort Belknap Indian Community
(Elected to administer the affairs of the community and
to represent the Assiniboiné and the Gros Ventre
Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation)

December 14, 2016

Statement in Support of the Nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke to Serve as Secretary of the Interior

Harlem, Montana – The Fort Belknap Indian Community is delighted that Congressman Ryan Zinke is under consideration to serve as the Secretary of the Interior. The Fort Belknap Indian Community strongly endorses Congressman Zinke's nomination for that important post.

The Secretary of the Interior is the chief steward of the trust relationship between the United States and Indian tribes. We have complete confidence that Congressman Zinke would be very successful in that role. During his service representing Montana in the United States House of Representatives, Congressman Zinke has been a stalwart advocate for tribes. We know that he both understands and respects tribal sovereignty and also cares deeply about Native American people.

It is not widely known, but Congressman Zinke is ceremonially adopted as an Assiniboiné, one of the two Tribes which, along with the Gros Ventre Tribe, comprise the Fort Belknap Indian Community. Congressman Zinke was a mentor and friend to Michael Bell, an Assiniboiné man and Navy SEAL who was killed while home on leave in 2006. Michael Bell's father, Theodore "Ted" Bell, is a Fort Belknap Tribal citizen. During Mike Bell's Navy service, Congressman Zinke was a constant source of advice and encouragement. We are grateful for Congressman Zinke's support for our relatives, and for Native youth more broadly.

Throughout his professional career in the Navy and in his service in the Montana Legislature and continuing in his service in the U.S. House, Congressman Zinke has established himself as a leader worthy of tribes' trust and confidence. His door is always open and in Fort Belknap's experience, he is always willing to listen. He is never afraid to take a fresh look at things. As he often reminds tribal representatives who meet with him, his view is that he works for us. Most importantly, Congressman Zinke has a significant sense of context for the challenges and opportunities facing Indian Country. He is not burdened by any learning curve, but instead would come to the Interior post with a wealth of experience, broad contacts and proven record of success in government-to-government relations.

For these reasons, the Fort Belknap Indian Community urges the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke to serve as the next Secretary of the Interior.

For further information, please contact Fort Belknap Indian Community Tribal Council President Mark Azure at (406) 353-8303 or mazure@fibelknap.org.



January 13, 2017

The Honorable Sen. Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sen. Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Nomination and Confirmation of
U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke as U.S. Secretary of the Interior**

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

Lighthouse Resources would like to go on record as supporting the nomination of U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke to be the next U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

We have found Congressman Zinke's leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives and, specifically, on the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources to be serious, substantive, and helpful to those who work with our country's important natural resources, and who act as good stewards of our land.

Lighthouse Resources operates and owns thermal coal mines in and around the Powder River Basin; specifically, the Decker mine in southeast Montana, where Congressman Zinke serves as our representative. As you know, coal from this region is known for better quality than other supplies. Decker has a great safety record, where it recently celebrated over 4 years without a lost time accident.

Lighthouse Resource's core business is supplying South Korea and Japan with this important domestic resource. South Korea and Japan import 96% of their energy needs. It is a matter of survival for them to have a reliable energy supply partner in the United States. As a former Navy SEAL, Representative Ryan Zinke understands the strategic importance of providing energy security to our allies and closest Asian trading partners. We are currently supplying this valuable resource to South Korea via ports in Canada, but are committed to developing this important infrastructure in the United States.

As such, we own the Millennium Bulk Terminals in Longview, Washington, a bulk materials port on the Columbia River. Millennium has already spent \$25 million cleaning up and an additional \$15 million in permitting costs to redevelop this former aluminum smelter into a world-class coal export terminal capable of maximum throughput of 44 million metric tons per year. This privately-funded capital project will bring much needed jobs and tax revenue. Millennium has gained strong local support, exemplified by endorsements from the Longview Daily News, the Longview\Kelso Building Trades, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21, and the Kelso\Longview Chamber of Commerce to name a few. Over 500 citizens and local businesses signed onto a support ad in the local newspaper, including 6 of 7 Longview City Council members. In addition, twenty-nine (29) Washington state legislators from both houses and both sides of the aisle recently signed a letter of support for the project.

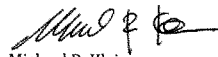
This trade with our allies substantially benefits rural communities in the United States. These are the areas where Lighthouse conducts its operations. The rural counties in which we operate have been suffering with high unemployment in the last 6 years, ranging from 6.4% to as high as 17% in Big Horn County, Montana and from 7.3% to as high as 13% in Cowlitz County, Washington. This coal trade also supplies substantial revenue to the federal, state, and local governments. Representative Zinke not only comes from a rural, natural resource based state economy, he also is a college graduate from the Pacific Northwest that relies on trade. He is in a unique position to understand how federal lands can be managed for the good of all the citizens of the United States.

Asia's demand for imported coal remains high. Japan has announced they will be building over 45 new coal-fired power plants to replace their historic dependence on nuclear energy after the Fukushima disaster. Japan and South Korea are committed to the provisions of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) and are building the most efficient ultra-super critical coal plants on the planet in order to reduce emissions concerns while still meeting their domestic energy needs. Currently, the U.S. supplies less than 2% of Asia's total demand for imports. The U.S. can certainly increase this percentage substantially and do it in the most efficient and environmentally responsible manner.

We look forward to working with Congress to encourage more energy trade with Asia which will allow U.S.-based energy companies to grow, expand, and hire more Americans. As President Trump looks for ways to increase economic growth and create new jobs, then energy trade with Asia is a fertile area for such growth and jobs. Ryan Zinke at the helm of the Interior Department would be an excellent first step and we would ask your committee to give him the highest consideration.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

We stand ready to be a resource to the committee should you feel we can be of value.



Michael R. Klein
Vice President & General Counsel



**National Cattlemen's
Beef Association**

January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Public Lands Council (PLC) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) would like to take this opportunity to express our support for the confirmation of Secretary-Designate Ryan Zinke to be the Secretary of the Interior. PLC is the only national organization dedicated solely to representing the roughly 22,000 ranchers who hold federal grazing permits and operate on federal lands. NCBA is the beef industry's largest and oldest national marketing and trade association, representing American cattlemen and women who provide much of the nation's supply of food and own or manage a large portion of America's private property.

During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Secretary-Designate Zinke has consistently advocated and voted for legislation that benefits western communities, economies and ranchers, including funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), increased wildfire funding, and defunding of the dangerous and overreaching Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule. He has demanded transparency and the inclusion of stakeholders when it comes to land management decisions.

Western ranchers own approximately 120 million acres of the most productive private land in the west and manage nearly 250 million acres of public land. Ranchers who hold grazing permits on public land do vital work that benefits public land including the improvement of water sources, improvement of wildlife habitat, and maintaining the open space that Americans enjoy. For too long, ranchers have been marginalized and overlooked during planning processes and the benefits they provide to public rangelands, wildlife and natural resources have gone unrecognized. Even worse, ranchers have been targeted by outside interests, and the current leadership of the Department of Interior refuses to stand up for the very people who have invested their time and livelihoods into the management and improvement of public lands. Having a Secretary of Interior who understands public lands, and who values true cooperation with stakeholders is in the best interest of all Americans.

PLC and NCBA appreciate the opportunity to provide our input on behalf of our members – the nation's food and fiber producers. We urge the Senate to confirm Secretary-Designate Zinke without delay.

Sincerely,

Dave Eliason
President
Public Lands Council

Tracy Brunner
President
National Cattlemen's Beef Association



NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

Headquarters: 11 Mile Hill Road • Newtown, CT 06470-2359 • Tel (203) 426-1320 x249 • Fax (203) 426-1087
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 E-mail lkeane@nssf.org • nssf.org

LAWRENCE G. KEANE
 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
 & GENERAL COUNSEL

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) is the trade association for the firearms, ammunition, hunting and recreational shooting sports industry. On behalf of our nearly 13,000 members, we write to express our strong support for the nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke as the 52nd Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior.

Sportsmen by nature are important stewards of the land. As a lifelong hunter, Congressman Zinke not only treasures the abundance of natural resources we are fortunate to have, but he will also fight to promote, protect and preserve our hunting and related outdoor traditions. As an avid sportsman, Congressman Zinke understands the importance of helping to ensure that generations to come have the same opportunities to enjoy America's rich outdoors that we do today.

The Secretary of the Interior is arguably the nation's single most important position with regard to the management of federal lands, wildlife habitat and natural resources. As evidenced by his admirable military career as a former Navy SEAL and his pro-sportsmen and conservation voting record, we are confident that if Congressman Zinke is afforded the opportunity to lead as top commander of our nation's natural resources and cultural heritage, the American people can be comforted in knowing that our precious natural resources will be in good hands.

NSSF is proud to offer its strong support of Congressman Zinke and urges all members of your committee and the entire distinguished body to vote in favor of President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke as the next Secretary of the Interior.

Thank you for your hard work and efforts to protect one of America's most important traditions.

Sincerely,

Lawrence G. Keane

cc: Members of the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

NSSF IS THE TRADE ASSOCIATION FOR AMERICA'S FIREARMS INDUSTRY.
 OUR MISSION: TO PROMOTE, PROTECT AND PRESERVE HUNTING AND THE SHOOTING SPORTS.

**Promoting youth
stewardship of
the great outdoors**



www.plscoalition.org
202-737-6272

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the Public Lands Service Coalition (PLSC), we write with respect to the nomination by President-Elect Trump of Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) to be the next Secretary of the Interior. Thank you for your timely consideration of his nomination and for your continued support for public lands, recreation, and youth engagement.

We are encouraged by the nomination of Rep. Zinke. During his time in the House of Representatives, he has established a record on issues we hope he would continue as Interior Secretary that are important to PLSC members such as on land and water stewardship, public-private partnerships, outdoor recreation, and most importantly youth and veteran engagement through the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) initiative.

Rep. Zinke was an early supporter of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act (S.1993 & HR 5114 in the 114th Congress), which has bipartisan support in the both the House and Senate. The 21CSC Act would establish public-private partnerships with land management agencies to engage thousands of returning veterans and young Americans in Corps to strengthen the nation's infrastructure, boost local economies, and multiply returns on our country's most valuable assets – it's unmatched landscapes and people. The 21CSC initiative is supported by the past four Secretaries of Interior (two Democrats and two Republicans) and by numerous private businesses, foundations, and national organizations.

With support for the 21CSC Act, praise of President Teddy Roosevelt and his legacy of conservation, support of public lands for the enjoyment of all Americans, and his work to promote new public-private partnerships for effective land management and conservation, Rep. Zinke appears to have a grasp of the many issues important to the country and Department of Interior. We look forward to expanding our work with Rep. Zinke as Interior Secretary to help him accomplish his goals and continue his record of support on these important issues.

The Executive Director of the Corps in Rep. Zinke's home state, Montana Conservation Corps, released a statement in response to Rep. Zinke's nomination that summarizes our thoughts well:

"I'm optimistic that Rep. Zinke will engage this country's rich cohort of Corps as valued partners with Interior to address the millions of dollars of deferred maintenance plaguing our public lands. He was an early champion and co-sponsor for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act, recognizing the value proposition for the American

Coalition Members

American Conservation Experience • Arizona Conservation Corps • Backcountry Horsemen of America • BRIDGE Network • Calif. Assn of Local Conservation Corps • California Conservation Corps • Campfire USA • Canyon Country Youth Corps • Citizens Conservation Corps of West Virginia • Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy, Inc. • Colorado Youth Corps Association • Community Training Works, Inc. • Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa • Conservation Legacy • EarthCorps • Environmental Stewards • Greater Appalachian Valley Conservation Corps • Greater Miami Service Corps • Groundwork USA • Limitless Vistas • Los Angeles Conservation Corps • Montana Conservation Corps • National Association of State Park Directors • National Congress of American Indians • National Parks Conservation Association • National Wildlife Federation • Nevada Conservation Corps • North Carolina Conservation Corps • Northwest Youth Corps • Operation Fresh Start • Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (CO) • Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (NM) • Sierra Club • Southeast Conservation Corps • Southwest Conservation Corps • Student Conservation Association • Texas Conservation Corps • The Corps Network • The Wilderness Society • The Y • Utah Conservation Corps • Vermont Youth Conservation Corps • Washington Conservation Corps

**Promoting youth
stewardship of
the great outdoors**



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people from leveraging the skills and enthusiasm of youth and veterans to enhance access and improve natural resources on our public lands for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.

As a self-described 'Teddy Roosevelt conservationist,' I think Rep. Zinke can relate to the values held by Corps across the country and reflected in TR's advice that 'Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.' We're doing it every day to maintain trails, combat invasive weeds, improve parks, and restore wildlife habitat on our local, state, and federal lands."

We again are encouraged by Rep. Zinke's nomination to be the next Secretary of Interior, and hope to work with him to continue and improve on his record, and President-Elect Trump, to be stewards of America's great outdoors and amazing natural resources. Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Members of the Public Lands Service Coalition

Coalition Members

American Conservation Experience • Arizona Conservation Corps • Backcountry Horsemen of America • BRIDGE Network • Calif. Assn. of Local Conservation Corps • California Conservation Corps • Campfire USA • Canyon County Youth Corps • Citizens Conservation Corps of West Virginia • Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy, Inc. • Colorado Youth Corps Association • Community Training Works, Inc. • Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa • Conservation Legacy • Earth Corps • Environmental Stewards • Greater Appalachian Valley Conservation Corps • Greater Miami Service Corps • Groundwork USA • Limitless Vistas • Los Angeles Conservation Corps • Montana Conservation Corps • National Association of State Park Directors • National Congress of American Indians • National Parks Conservation Association • National Wildlife Federation • Nevada Conservation Corps • North Carolina Conservation Corps • Northwest Youth Corps • Operation Fresh Start • Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (CO) • Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (NM) • Sierra Club • Southwest Conservation Corps • Southwest Conservation Corps • Student Conservation Association • Texas Conservation Corps • The Corps Network • The Wilderness Society • The Y • Utah Conservation Corps • Vermont Youth Conservation Corps • Washington Conservation Corps



Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

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OFFICERS
Charles R. Vig
Chairman
Keith B. Anderson
Vice-Chairman
Freedom Brewer
Secretary/Treasurer

January 11, 2017

Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Steve Daines
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Al Franken
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke

Dear Madam Chair and Senators Daines and Franken:

I am writing on behalf of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) and my fellow Business Council members, Vice Chairman Keith Anderson and Secretary/Treasurer Freedom Brewer, in support of President-elect Trump's nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

As you know, our Tribe actively advocates strengthening the nation-to-nation relationship between each Indian tribe and the United States and protecting the sovereignty of each Indian tribe.

We were heartened that in his statement accepting the nomination, Congressman Zinke said – "Most important, our sovereign Indian Nations and territories must have the respect and freedom they deserve." We know, from the SMSC's close relations with Indian tribes in Montana, that Congressman Zinke has been appropriately responsive to tribal needs and aspirations. Congressman Zinke's statement is consistent with what he accomplished on behalf of the tribal governments located in Montana during the last Congress. The SMSC is pleased that this approach will define how Congressman Zinke takes on the crucial task of being the lead federal fiduciary for the trust relationship the United States has with Indian tribes and individuals.

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Page 2

We join other tribes throughout Indian country to urge Congressman Zinke, once he is confirmed as Secretary, to lead the Department of the Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs with his proven respect of tribal sovereignty, understanding of the solemn trust relationship between Indian tribes and the United States, recognition of treaty rights, and determination to reduce the huge unmet needs that exist in Indian country.

The SMSC is pleased to support the nomination of Congressman Zinke to be the next Interior Secretary. We urge the Committee and the U.S. Senate to give his nomination prompt and favorable approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles R. Vig".

Charles R. Vig
Tribal Chairman

Cc: Honorable Amy Klobuchar, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

January 12, 2017

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), a national sportsmen's conservation organization, would like to offer our support for President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke for the next Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

As a Montanan and an avid outdoorsman, Congressman Zinke understands the importance of our nation's outdoor heritage. In his time in the House of Representatives, he has established himself as a leader on many issues important to America's hunters and anglers.

In Montana and across the country, outdoor recreation powers an immense economic engine that employs millions of Americans and generates more than \$646 billion in spending each year. Congressman Zinke understands that efforts to sustain and expand this valuable outdoor economy require a two-pronged approach that includes both natural resource conservation and appropriate access to those natural resources. To that end, during his time in Congress, Representative Zinke has supported our nation's unique legacy of public lands, cosponsored legislation to reauthorize key conservation programs, and sought sensible ways to improve the management of our national forests.

We are confident that, as Secretary of Interior, Congressman Zinke will continue to approach resource management issues with an eye towards improving the multiple-use productivity of our public lands and seeking solutions that balance the needs of all Americans—including current and future generations of hunters and anglers. The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership urges you to support the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Whit Fosburgh".

Whit Fosburgh
President and CEO
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Senator DAINES. Thank you. Representative Zinke, why do you want this job?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, I have been asked that. Thanks for the question, and thank you for the remarks. I love my country, I love public lands, and I love Teddy Roosevelt's idea that we should think bold and big and prepare for the future. And this job I take very seriously, if confirmed, because of all that.

Our country loves our parks and our lands. Our nation should be better equipped, our Indian tribes with the ability for self-determination. And when the Department of the Interior has an influence over a fifth of our territory, that means influencing beaches in Maine, with clams to our fisheries outside of Hawaii. Even in this body we are all different, but we all share a common purpose, to make our country great again.

I think as the Secretary of the Interior, I think I will have inherited 70,000 hard-charging, dedicated professionals that want to do the same thing, and my task is to organize for a better future for Interior and our country. I will work with anybody, as the list would indicate. I have never been red or blue. To me it has always been red, white and blue. Politically, I have never asked an individual serving next to me whether they are Republican or Democrat. What has mattered to me is they are American and love their country, and they are committed to mission success. We have a very important mission in the Department of the Interior ahead of us.

Senator DAINES. Representative Zinke, a lot of concerns that Montanans have had with previous Department of the Interior leaders is that a lot of land use decisions are done with disregard—with disregard for the impacts to those who live close to the lands. You have made that clear today as an issue of trust and so forth. In fact, as we have traveled around the state together, one of your favorite lines is a lot of the bureaucrats back here in D.C. could not find Montana on a map. Whether it is national monument designations, sage-grouse plans, a moratorium on coal leasing, too often Montanans face decisions on their public lands that are made by out-of-touch Washington D.C. bureaucrats.

My question has two parts. What are your views in facilitating more local control and management of our Federal lands out West, and by "West," we have a true Westerner here, somebody from Montana. And how can we make the Department of the Interior look more like Montana and get it closer to the people?

Mr. ZINKE. Great question. I would say we need to shore up our front line. If our front line managers do not have the resources, if they do not have the flexibility nor the authority to make the decision they know is right, there is a problem. In the military, it is like being on the front line and asking for a bullet. You have got to go all the way to the back to headquarters to get a bullet, and when you finally get it, then you have got to ask permission to shoot it. If you get permission to shoot it, then you have got to ask permission to shoot at what. And that is what has happened a lot of times of our front line managers.

We are losing a lot of BLM folks because they have just had it. And so, we need to shore up the front line to empower the front line to do good things with broad guidance, and understand that

their guidance—and they should be incentivized on their evaluations of working with local communities. That is how you do it. You reward on an evaluation how did you collaborate? Did you talk to the local community? Do you have the local community's support? That is a part of it.

So, I think collaborative efforts work. I think generally they deliver the better outcome. But, again, my job or, I think, my most important task is restore trust. When a BLM truck or a Fish and Wildlife Service truck shows up, one is you want to see management in your eyes, and you want to know it is in good hands. I think in many cases we have been too heavy handed as a— as a nation, and there is a separation between those living on the land and those in management. Unfortunately, a lot of times those management decisions are made here. You are right. If you do not know the difference between Butte and Bozeman, maybe you are not in the right position to make those decisions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator DAINES. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. We will next go to Senator Cortez Masto.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. Congressman, it is nice to meet you for the first time. It is unfortunate we did not have a chance to meet prior to today. So, with your indulgence, I will jump right in because I am one of those western states, particularly in Nevada where 85 percent of the land is owned by the Federal Government, and we deal with eight Federal agencies on a regular basis. So your role as potential Secretary of the Interior is very important to us in Nevada.

I have heard what you had to say about the Antiquities Act, and let me get one more commitment from you. Just recently we had two national monuments declared—the Basin and Range and Gold Butte. We would love for you to come out to Nevada and take a look at those monuments. There was some vocal opposition, but I will tell you that a majority of Nevadans support these designations. If you would make a commitment to come out, we would love to host you.

Mr. ZINKE. I will make a commitment to that, and I will make a commitment also to every member. If you have a monument in your state, before I make a recommendation to the President, I am going to talk to you. I am going to talk to the delegation. I am going to make sure we are all working together on this, and that is what a Secretary should do up front.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. Thank you, Congressman. I appreciate that, and I appreciate your talk and discussion on collaboration and your goal of restoring trust by working with the locals and the local communities in the state. We look forward to that.

One of the areas is in Nevada—most people do not realize there are 32 tribal reservations in Nevada. I would just love a commitment if you would guarantee that tribal members would have a seat at the table when it comes to decisions, activities and land management near their communities when it involves the Department of the Interior.

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, ma'am, and I have—I have had the same discussion with the great State of Minnesota. I think we all would like

to see BIA be better. How we do that, because they have not been better. We need improvement on that, and I think we need to do two—three things. Again, sovereignty should mean something. So, when we say you are a sovereign nation, let us have the discussion of how to—how to empower that. Secondly, respect. In many cases, our Indian nations have not had the respect that I think they deserve. And lastly, how do we empower great nations for self-determination? What tools do they need? The education oftentimes is lacking, but it is state by state. Some of the education opportunities in Alaska and tribes, you know, far exceed anything in the lower 48, but that is not always the case. So, I think—

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. Thank you, Congressman. I appreciate your comments. Wild horses have not been brought up yet. And as you may or may not know, in Nevada this is a big issue. In fact, the wild horse population in Nevada is over 31,000. I am curious. How would the BLM under your direction humanely handle the wild horse and burro population crisis?

Mr. ZINKE. Great question. I have learned more in the past couple weeks about burros and horses from multiple states, and this is where we are going to have to have discussion and work together. Clearly the present policy is a disaster. It is enormously expensive.

I am a great horseman, and I am very sensitive to making sure that horses do not starve, that we—that we treat animals in a humane way. But kicking them out and then spending millions of dollars every year on a program that is not working? Let us work together to figure out how to fix it. We are a great nation. We can fix the burro problem. We can fix the horse problem. And it is not just in Nevada as you know. It is western, and I understand there is a problem in Florida, too.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. And then water rights obviously are an important issue for the western states. I do not think has been brought up but seven in 10 people in Nevada get a majority of their water supply from Lake Mead, and the last 15 years of the drought has exposed a bathwater, kind of like, ring around Lake Mead to show the level has decreased. It is obviously a concern of ours and many of the states up and down the Colorado River.

Arizona, California and Nevada are in principal agreement on a drought contingency plan, and our concern is that with this transition there is going to be a real impact on the water supply for Nevada if there is a lag time during this transition. I would like to know how you will exercise your authority and leadership to help the states finalize and implement their drought contingency plans.

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you for the question. As I mentioned earlier, water is critical for a number of reasons. We have to look at storage, we have to look at efficiency, we have to look at our infrastructure, all of which are behind, and then negotiate in good faith. When everyone walks in a room with an agenda and they are unwilling to budge from that, that is not good faith.

So leadership is recognizing the importance of having a win-win, and also recognizing that we have to do better on our infrastructure. We waste an enormous amount of water in this country, especially in the West, not having a holding capacity. Some of our dams

are lacking. There is a lot of opportunity, but we need to manage our resources, I think, better, and DOI can have a huge role in that.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Great. So you are committed to working with the state on that contingency plan?

Mr. ZINKE. Absolutely.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much. Congressman Zinke, thank you for your willingness to take this on to what, as you know and you can see from today, is going to be a very contentious job from time to time. But somebody has got to do it, and I am glad you are there. I am particularly thankful to the President-elect for picking a Westerner to do this who understands Western issues.

My years here have taught me what a difference there is between East and West. I have come to the conclusion that the Mississippi River gets wider every year. I watched in Tennessee as a forest fire burned this year, and your heart goes out to those people. Everyone in Tennessee is just aghast at this. We live with this every year. A number of the senators up here have fires that are substantially bigger than what happened in Tennessee.

I do not mean to denigrate what happened there. It was a terrible disaster. But we live with this all the time, and yet we have fought in a bipartisan fashion to try to get fire funding straightened out, and we have not been able to do it. Hopefully with the new Administration and we have some change, we are going to be able to do it.

You know, when you look at the percentages of our states that are owned by the Federal Government—two-thirds in Idaho, substantially more in Nevada. I think, Senator Masto, you are going to find that it is frustrating because the people who live east of the Mississippi are sometimes very cavalier about our problems. And probably one of the poster children for that is the monument situation. The President with a stroke of a pen, be he a Republican or a Democrat, sets aside a million or more acres. If this happened to a state back East, people would be up in arms about it. And yet it happens—it winds up on the front page of the paper, and it is gone. Nobody ever thinks about it again. And the collaborative method that has been discussed here is really critical in these public land situations.

I did it when I was Governor. Senator Wyden has referred to how they have been doing it in Oregon, and that is the way these things get done. They are going to get done in the future, and the only way they are going to get done. A lot of us have introduced a bill that is going to do something about that as far as the monuments are concerned.

The states really have a role in this, and that brings me to my next point that I want to make before I run out of time, and that is to talk about management in the Department of the Interior. They do not call it the Department of Everything Else for nothing. I mean, it has got lots and lots of different responsibilities and what have you.

One of the most frustrating things that happened to us with the Department of the Interior was with the sage-grouse. Secretary

Salazar, to his great credit, went out and said, hey, we have got a big issue here with sage-grouse. Governors, why do you not sit down and see if you cannot do something about this, and they did. In Idaho, I do not know about the other states, but I can tell you in Idaho, that thing was done incredibly well, bringing all sides to the table, using a collaborative method, including people from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Fish and Wildlife Service. They had a seat at the table. They constructed a plan. It was a give and take process. When they were all done, the plan was approved by everybody unanimously, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. So, now the plan comes back to Washington, D.C., and the BLM says wait a second, not so fast.

When I first met Sally Jewell, the first thing I said to her after niceties was have you ever heard of sage-grouse, and she said, no, I have not. Obviously, I was one of the first ones she talked to. I told her the problem that we had between the BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I said, when you were head of REI, if the marketing people were fighting with the accounting department, you would step in and do something about this. I want some help on this. Fish and Wildlife Service says it is all right. BLM says, well, we have experts over here that says that this plan is—well, what are we doing there? One agency, and they are employing scientists on both sides that are going to fight with each other. Why bother having a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if the BLM can come in and overrule? Well, at the beginning we made some progress in that regard, but lately that has fallen off the charts.

I guess what I want to talk to you about is management. My good friend here on my right says that there are going to be wholesale changes at the EPA. Well, I hope you can do the same thing at the Department of the Interior.

It is frustrating, and it makes us angry when you get two Federal agencies that are in disagreement with each other, and the head of the Department will not step in and say, hey, I am going to resolve this. I am the head of this. BLM, stand down. These people are in charge of wildlife. And if you do not want to do that, fine, but let us get rid of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are paying a lot of money for it. Let the BLM do it if they are going to be the ones that can overrule them.

I am encouraged by what I hear today. One thing we did not talk about when we met was NIFC. I do not know. Have you ever visited the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise?

Mr. ZINKE. No, sir.

Senator RISCH. Okay. Well, I will look forward—

Mr. ZINKE. I have been on the front lines on multiple fires—

Senator RISCH. So have I.

Mr. ZINKE [continuing]. In the Rocky Mountains.

Senator RISCH. You are going to be impressed when you visit NIFC. I know you that you are going to do that. We will be interested in showing it off. It falls in line with one of the things you and I talked about, and that is they have a map at NIFC with a little dinky red dot for every fire start in America each year, and it is thousands of them. Right in the center of it is NIFC, it is located there for a reason and a good reason.

Anyway, thank you. My time is up. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch. Senator King.

Senator KING. Thank you, Madam Chair. Welcome to the committee. I have enjoyed your testimony today. I first want to thank you for your straightforward recognition that climate change is happening and that human activity is contributing to it, and also for the image of the glacier retreating during lunch. So, I am going to add that to my arsenal of climate change anecdotes.

The theme of the hearing today in many ways has been one size does not fit all, and collaboration, consultation and communication.

You alluded to an issue we have in Maine with a national park. There is a national park rule about you cannot exploit natural resources on national parks. On the other hand, in the inner tidal zone at Acadia National Park where people have been digging clams since time immemorial, suddenly the park decided you cannot do that anymore. That to me is an example of how there should be a better communication and relationship between the park, which is an enormously important asset to the State of Maine, and its neighboring communities. Do you agree?

Mr. ZINKE. I agree, and I am glad you appreciate the theme has been collaboration, restoring trust, infrastructure, making sure our front lines have the right tools to make the decisions and working with the local communities.

Senator KING. I hope you will take that message throughout the Department about listen first and act later. I think we can have, as you say, restoration of trust and a lot more confidence in the decisions wherever they are made. By the way, if you are going move BLM out West, you are welcome to move the Park Service headquarters to Maine if you choose. Too far away somebody said? Come on.

Backlog. The backlog in the parks is a straightforward problem of funding; we should be funding to pay the maintenance of the parks. We have basically been putting it off for 10 or 15 or 20 years. I hope you will approach the upcoming budget as saying this is part of our obligation to pay the park rangers, and to pay all the expenses of the parks and to chip away at this backlog. Will you consider that?

Mr. ZINKE. Absolutely, and this is why this committee is so incredibly important, and the Chairman from Alaska is so incredibly important, because I may own the helicopter, but I have to ask you for the gas. In order to fund the parks at the level required, it goes to this body, and I have to convince you that the money that is going to be spent and it will be prioritized. I have to convince the President-elect that the parks are his priority as well because they should be America's priority.

Senator KING. Well, a point that was made earlier about the backlog, I think the Chairman talked about the return on investment is gigantic in terms of what we put into the parks versus the economic activity that they generate in their areas. So, it is a good investment for the public and, I believe, for the Government itself.

A similar concern. We are now talking about in recent days about a major defense buildup. We are talking about a major infrastructure investment. We are talking about major tax cuts. All of

those together do not really add up in terms of the arithmetic in the budget, and the deficit and the debt. Therefore, there is going to be a lot of pressure on various areas of the Federal Government, particularly the non-defense areas. Will you resist stoutly with the heart of the Navy SEAL efforts to raid the Land and Water Conservation Fund to fund other government priorities?

Mr. ZINKE. I am on record of supporting full funding of the Land Water Conservation Fund for a reason. I think it is an incredibly important program. It has done great work. This is probably one of the reasons why the President-elect put a former Navy SEAL in place.

I do not yield to pressure. Higher principle, yes. But my job is to advocate for the Department of the Interior, to make sure we have the right funds, and be a voice in the room on great public policy. There are going to be a lot of times where I am going to need the help of this body because by myself I do not have the authority. I have to follow the law, and I will follow the law.

I think the law needs to be adjusted in some areas, as this body has often said. In order to adjust it, one, we have to trust whoever is going to execute is going to do it well. And two, is I need bipartisan support to make sure the law is adjusted appropriately so we can move the ball up the field, if that is the right terminology, to make our park system make DOI better.

Senator KING. Well, I for one, and I cannot speak for the committee, but we certainly want to work with you. I learned as a lawyer in Maine when you get the answer you want, you sit down and shut up. So, I yield back my time, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator King. Senator Flake, right on time.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you. I have enjoyed hearing the testimony. Sorry I had to step out for a minute, and I hope I am not re-plowing old ground here.

As you know, Arizona is home to a lot of public lands between the land that the Department of the Interior administers directly and then that it holds in trust or administers for the tribes. That is about half of the state right there. When you take into account Federal, State, and tribal land, that is about 85 percent of Arizona. So, we have only got about 15 percent in private hands.

That means that decisions made by the Federal Government, including the Department of the Interior, have a real outsized impact on the state. We talked about a lot of the issues, and thank you for coming to my office. I know you committed to me, and it sounds like everybody else, to visit their state in the early stages, so you will have a busy travel schedule.

We mentioned, and I know was brought up a little bit, in terms of the drought and the Colorado River, and the Basin states are very close to an agreement on a drought contingency plan to leave additional water behind the dam at Lake Mead so that we do not hit the stage where there are arbitrary cuts that would hurt us badly.

It is crucial for Arizona obviously that we work with the Department of the Interior to ensure that Arizona water users to the extent they leave water behind the dam, that that water does not disappear down some canal in some other state. That is the only basis

on which some contingency plan would work. Will you commit to work with us in that regard? We got assurance last year from the Department of the Interior. That assurance will have to go forward until there is a drought contingency plan.

Mr. ZINKE. I will commit to working with you. As earlier discussed, I do recognize that water, particularly in the West, is a big issue, in every state in the West. We have got to get together and figure this out. I think some of it is infrastructure, the best plan on water requirements are going to be, and that is to make sure we have the infrastructure to reach those requirements.

And it is going to be probably trifold. Some of it going to be efficiency. Some of that is going to be building better capture facilities, and then looking at the infrastructure we have. We are wasting a lot of water. There is no question of that. So let us make sure that every drop is precious, and let us make sure that our water is clean. I think we can do that.

Senator FLAKE. Still on the subject of water, Indian water settlements. Last year I introduced the Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act. Last week I introduced the bill to make necessary clarifications to the White Mountain Apache Tribe settlement. I know that you were a sponsor of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act, so you understand the importance of these settlements for both tribal and non-tribal users. Can we count on you to work with me and with the tribes and other parties in Arizona to make sure the Hualapai settlement moves forward and also that we get the necessary clarifications to the White Mountain Apache Tribe settlement?

Mr. ZINKE. I do, and I would like to also thank Senator Daines for his work on the Blackfeet Water Compact. I view water compacts as a treaty obligation, and I think we need to uphold our part of that treaty obligation.

The water compacts, as you know, are difficult. They involve the State, the tribes, and the Federal Government, and then within the Federal Government, it is not easy. But I do recognize the importance of working with you on the compacts, and also the importance of getting them resolved. They are a liability that is out there. We need to recognize they are our liability. They are not an earmark. It is a treaty obligation, and let us work together to get them done.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you. As you know, cattle ranching has a long history in Arizona and continues to hold a prominent place in our present-day state as well as our history. I come from ranching family. In fact, this last weekend I was back on the F-Bar where I was raised near Snowflake.

Ranching is never an easy business, but it is made more difficult with issues like was already raised with the burro in northwestern Arizona and the Mexican gray wolf in southeastern Arizona. What we continue to hear is a lack of cooperation and coordination between the Federal agencies and the local land users. I know that you have already committed to work on this. You will be hearing a lot when you come to Arizona about the issues that we have with wild burros as well as the Mexican gray wolf issues.

Mr. ZINKE. I am concerned, quite frankly, about the optic of, whether it is BLM or the Forest Service. I grew up when Smokey

the Bear was revered. I mean, who could not like Smokey the Bear? And now in some part of our great nation, it is feared. When they see Smokey the Bear, they think of law enforcement rather than managing our forests.

So I am very concerned about that because it has implications of the next generation. So, we have to come together and make sure that management, our team, out there is viewed as helpful, viewed as land managers and not to be feared. You know, you want to stop by and say hello. You do not want to avoid. In some places, the further you get out, in parts of Alaska and parts of Montana, they are viewed as law enforcement and obstructionists.

I think we need to be really careful as leaders of this great nation to recognize it and go forward with solutions and to make sure the next generation looks to law enforcement, be it BLM or Fish and Game, as good neighbors and helpful rather than to be feared.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Franken.

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you. Let me get this straight. Smokey the Bear is not real, right? [Laughter.]

Mr. ZINKE. He is real to me, sir. [Laughter.]

Senator FRANKEN. Okay. That might be disqualifying. [Laughter.]

Thank you for your service as a Navy SEAL, to your daughter's service as a Navy SEAL, to your son-in-law, who, frankly, terrifies me. I do not know if anyone has looked at him. He is out with one of your granddaughters, who, by the way, the granddaughters, you are the unsung heroes of this hearing. You have been wonderful. You have a beautiful family.

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you, sir.

Senator FRANKEN. I want to get into what I consider a false choice, and the false choice that I hear you have iterated a couple of times is between addressing climate change and the economy. I think that is a false choice.

I think it is a false choice because, one, if we do not address it, it is going to cost us a tremendous amount of resources. Superstorm Sandy cost approximately \$60 billion because sea level has risen. Glacier National Park is going to be, I do not know, Lake National Park or Mountain National Park, but it is not going to be Glacier in 30 years. In Minnesota, we have built lots and lots of clean energy jobs, and we are addressing climate change. We put in a renewable energy standard, and it has been very successful for our businesses.

You signed a letter in 2010, and I just want to clarify your stance. In this letter you urged Federal lawmakers—this is a bunch of state legislators who do this—hundreds and hundreds of state legislators—to “pass comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” Now, this letter also stated that “climate change is a threat multiplier for instability in the most volatile regions of the world” and that “the climate threat presents significant national security challenges for the United States, challenges that should be addressed today because they will almost certainly get worse if we delay.”

I completely agree with that letter. And I ask unanimous consent, Madam Chair, to include this in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. [Off audio.]

[The information referred to follows:]



Contact: CLEAN Chair and Minnesota State Rep. Jeremy Kalin
Rep.Jeremy.Kalin@House.mn or 612-875-2546

President Barack Obama
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader John Boehner
Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
House Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
Members of the 111st Congress

Dear President Obama, Speaker Pelosi, Representative Boehner, Leader Reid, Senator McConnell, and all members of the 111th Congress,

As leaders in state legislatures across the country, we call on you to pass comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.

State legislators have been leading clean energy efforts for decades. As the laboratories of democracy, states have proven that clean energy jobs and climate legislation results in job growth, in greater security, and in spurring American leadership and innovation.

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

29 states have passed Renewable Portfolio Standards and four more have set renewable energy goals, requiring that a significant percentage of that states' electricity be generated from non-fossil fuels. These renewable electricity requirements have led to significant job growth in the clean-energy sector.

Nearly every state in the nation has made energy-efficiency a priority. These energy efficiency investments have helped major industries stay competitive, and have helped schools, cities, counties, and other local governments save hundreds of millions of dollars in energy costs.

In states where renewable power and energy efficiency is a policy priority, the clean energy economy has outpaced the rest of the economy, in some cases nearly 10 to 1. While other sectors of the economy have been losing jobs, the clean energy economy is a bright spot for job creation.

State and local governments are seeing the benefit of clean energy jobs legislation, but we also face steep costs due to the risks associated with climate change. The costs and instabilities involve massive flooding and major hurricane damage, sustained droughts and widespread agricultural pests and diseases, and major biological disruptions affecting our water and food supply,

health care, and public safety. These catastrophic costs affect insurance payouts and higher premiums for private- and public-sector policyholders. They also involve unprecedented economic losses to industry and to federal, state and local governments.

NATIONAL SECURITY

America's dependence on foreign energy makes our nation vulnerable, in terms of economics and national security.

According to the Energy Information Agency, our federal energy trade deficit is approximately \$1 billion a day, or more than \$10,000 a second. To fuel our economy, we depend on unstable, unfriendly nations who don't share American values. As a result, in the words of former CIA Director James Woolsey and Senator John McCain, we are funding both sides of the war on terror.

Our nation's most respected military leaders recognize that climate change is a threat multiplier for instability in the most volatile regions of the world. **The climate change threat presents significant national security challenges for the United States – challenges that should be addressed today, because they will almost certainly get worse if we delay.**

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION

The global economy is increasingly a clean energy economy. We must ensure that we do not replace our reliance on Middle Eastern oil with a reliance on Chinese solar panels and South American biofuels. As a nation, we have always relied on the ingenuity of the American people to solve our problems, and a federal clean energy jobs and climate bill will give American innovation the chance to shine again.

Through its centrally-controlled economy, China has quickly leaped ahead on renewable energy development, including the world's largest solar power plant. India is moving forward with its ambitious National Action Plan on Climate Change. **The United States of America cannot allow nearly every other nation to beat us to the clean energy economy.**

Today, American industry faces a confusing patchwork of state incentives, regulation and energy and emission targets that hinders innovation. **Only Congress can provide a predictable, national framework that will spur innovation and discovery in the clean energy sector.**

Forty years ago, the Apollo 11 mission provided a dramatic display of America's innovation and spirit of discovery. President John F. Kennedy explained that we chose to "go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills."

The clean energy and climate challenge is America's new space race. The United States has never backed down from a challenge on this scale, and we urge you to again place our country at the forefront of innovation and prosperity.

We, the undersigned state legislators, call on you to enact comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate legislation that relies on continued close collaboration between state and federal governments. We pledge our support in pursuit of a more prosperous, more secure, and more energy independent America.

Sincerely,

CLEAN Chair, Minnesota State Rep. Jeremy Kalin, on behalf of 1,210 state lawmakers from 49 states

COALITION OF LEGISLATIONS FOR ENERGY ACTION NOW
1,210 STATE LEGISLATOR SIGNATORIES URGING CONGRESSIONAL ACTION
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Rep. Eddie Ableser, AZ	Sen. Rosalyn Baker, HI	Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber, WI
Sen. Paula Aboud, AZ	<i>Chair, Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee</i>	Rep. Maria A Berrios, IL
Rep. Joseph Abruzzo, FL	Sen. JoNell Bakke, ND	<i>Chair, Bio-Technology Committee</i>
Rep. Alma Adams, NC	Rep. Ruth Balser, MA	Rep. Seth Berry, ME
<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee</i>	Rep. David Baram, CT	Rep. Joe Bertram III, HI
Rep. Herb Adams, ME	Rep. Jeb Bardon, IN	Sen. Don Betzold, MN
Sen. Amanda Aguirre, AZ	Rep. Elias Barela, NM	Rep. Karla Bigham, MN
Rep. Edith Ajello, RI	Sen. David Baria, MS	Sen. Stan Bingham, NC
<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Jeff Barker, OR	Rep. Jackie Biskupski, UT
Sen. Charles Albertson, NC	Rep. John Barnes, IN	Rep. Clement Bissonnette, VT
Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon, NM	Assm. Peter Barnes III, NJ	Rep. Spencer Black, WI
Del. Kenneth Alexander, VA	Rep. Phil Barnhart, OR	<i>Chair, Natural Resources Committee</i>
Rep. Martha Alexander, NC	Rep. Dick Barrett, MT	Rep. Richard D. Blanchard, ME
Rep. Kelly Alexander Jr, NC	Rep. John Bartlett, IN	Rep. Lynne Blankenkemper, NH
<i>Vice-Chair, Water Resources and Infrastructure Committee</i>	Sen. Phillip Bartlett, ME	Sen. Patricia Blevins, DE
Sen. Justin Alfond, ME	<i>Senate Majority Leader</i>	<i>Senate Majority Leader</i>
Del. Saqib Ali, MD	Rep. Brent Barton, OR	Rep. Anders Blewett, MT
Rep. Alma Allen, TX	<i>Vice-Chair, Business and Labor Committee</i>	Sen. Lawrence Bliss, ME
Rep. Lucy Allen, NC	Del. Kumar Barve, MD	Assm. Marty Block, CA
<i>Vice-Chair, Water Resources and Infrastructure Committee</i>	<i>Majority Leader</i>	<i>Assistant Majority Whip</i>
Rep. Peter Allen, NH	Sen. Ray Basham, MI	Rep. Anna Blodgett, ME
Rep. Susan Almy, NH	<i>Vice-Chair, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee</i>	Rep. David Bly, MN
Rep. Roberto Alonzo, TX	Sen. Christopher Bateman, NJ	Del. Elizabeth Bobo, MD
Sen. Elaine Alquist, CA	Sen. Alan Bates, OR	<i>Chair, Land Use and Ethics Subcommittee</i>
Sen. Pam Althoff, IL	<i>Senate Majority Whip</i>	Assm. David Bobzien, NV
Rep. Carol Alvarado, TX	Rep. Joan Bauer, MI	Rep. Donna Boe, ID
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Sen. Ellen Anderson, MN	Rep. John Beard, IA	Rep. Mike Boland, IL
<i>Chair, Environment and Energy Finance Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Natural Resources Committee</i>	Sen. Joe Bolkcom, IA
Rep. Kathy Angerer, MI	Rep. Jane Beaulieu, NH	Rep. Valinda Bolton, TX
<i>Majority Floor Leader</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Agriculture Committee</i>	Sen. Suzanne Bonamici, OR
Rep. Sherry Appleton, WA	Rep. Michael Beaulieu, ME	Sen. Terri Bonoff, MN
Rep. Dennis Apuan, CO	Rep. Paul Beck, MT	Rep. Deborah Boone, OR
Sen. Dave Aronberg, FL	Rep. Henry Beck, ME	Rep. David Borden, NH
<i>Chair, Military Affairs and Domestic Security Committee</i>	Rep. Arlene Becker, MT	Rep. Alice Bordsen, NC
Rep. Brian M. Ashe, MA	Rep. Ray Begaye, NM	Rep. Frosty Boss Ribs, MT
Sen. Tim Ashe, VT	<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture and Water Resources Committee</i>	Rep. Bill Botzow, VT
Rep. Cory Atkins, MA	Rep. Della Belatti, HI	Rep. Merle Boucher, ND
Rep. Joe Atkins, MN	Rep. Larry Bell, NC	<i>House Minority Leader</i>
<i>Chair, Commerce and Labor Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture Committee</i>	Sen. Peter Bowman, ME
Sen. Bob Atwater, NC	Rep. Debbie Benefield, CO	Sen. Betty Boyd, CO
Rep. Shannon Augare, MT	Rep. Bernie Benn, NH	<i>President Pro-Tem</i>
<i>House Majority Whip</i>	Rep. Jennifer E Benson, MA	Sen. Jim Bradford, SD
Rep. Terri Austin, IN	Rep. John Benson, MN	Rep. Matthew Bradford, PA
<i>Chair, Roads & Transportation Committee</i>	Rep. Terese Berceau, WI	Rep. David Bradley, AZ
Rep. Dennis Avery, IN	Rep. Lyla Berg, HI	Rep. Gerald Brady, DE
Rep. Jules Bailey, OR	Sen. Linda Berglin, MN	Rep. Joan Brady, SC
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	<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Rep. Mary Brandenburg, FL
		Sen. Joseph Brannigan, ME
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		Sen. Joan Bray, MO
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Rep. Tim Briggs, PA	Rep. Becky Carney, NC	Sen. Spencer Coggs, WI
Del. Bob Brink, VA	<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce, Small</i>	<i>Chair, Labor, Elections and Urban</i>
Rep. Ronald Brise, FL	<i>Business & Entrepreneurship</i>	<i>Affairs Committee</i>
Rep. William Brisson, NC	Del. Alfred C. Carr, MD	Rep. Ellen Cohen, TX
<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture Committee</i>	Del. Betsy Carr, VA	Rep. Joan Cohen, ME
Sen. John Broden, IN	Rep. Mele Carroll, HI	Sen. Richard Cohen, MN
Assm. Richard Brodsky, NY	Sen. Morgan Carroll, CO	Rep. Jill Cohenour, MT
Del. William Bronrott, MD	Rep. Richard Carroll, AR	Rep. Garnet Coleman, TX
Rep. Charlie Brown, IN	Rep. Terrance Carroll, CO	Sen. Jacqueline Collins, IL
Rep. Edna Brown, OH	<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Rep. Marlow Colvin, IL
Rep. Jack Brown, AZ	Rep. Seth Carson, WY	Rep. Gary Connor, ME
Rep. Larry Brown, NH	Assm. Wilmer Amina Carter, CA	Rep. Chip Conquest, VT
Rep. Terry Brown, MI	Rep. Alan Casavant, ME	Rep. Kari Conrad, ND
Assm. Julia Brownley, CA	Rep. Frank Case, NH	Rep. Steve Conway, WA
Rep. William Brownsberger, MA	Rep. Ed Casso, CO	<i>Chair, Commerce and Labor</i>
<i>Vice-Chair, Global Warming and</i>	Rep. Ted Celeste, OH	<i>Committee</i>
<i>Climate Change Committee</i>	<i>Chair, Alternative Energy</i>	Sen. Tanya Cook, NE
Sen. John Brueggeman, MT	<i>Committee</i>	Sen. Mike Cooney, MT
Rep. Angela Bryant, NC	Rep. Tom Chabin, AZ	Sen. Ellen Corbett, CA
<i>Chair, Energy and Energy Efficiency</i>	Rep. Bobby Joe Champion, MN	Rep. Alex Cornell du Houx, ME
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Kathleen Chandler, OH	Rep. Marc Corriveau, MI
Rep. Mark Bryant, ME	Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, IL	Sen. Jay Costa, PA
Rep. Kathy Brynaert, MN	Rep. Maralyn Chase, WA	Rep. Nathan Cote, NM
Rep. Peter Buckley, OR	<i>Chair, Trade Policy Committee</i>	Rep. Tricia Cotham, NC
Rep. Debbie Buckner, GA	Rep. Gail Chasey, NM	Rep. Andy Coulouris, MI
Rep. Dwight Bullard, FL	Rep. Eleanor Chavez, NM	Rep. Lois Court, CO
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Rep. Barb Byrum, MI	Rep. Frank Chopp, WA	Rep. Steve J. D'Amico, MA
Rep. Mary Caferro, MT	<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Sen. Kevin Dahle, MN
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Rep. Chad Campbell, AZ	Rep. Herbert Clark, ME	Sen. Don Davis, NC
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Rep. James "Jim" Campbell, ME	Rep. Katherine Clark, MA	<i>Environment, and Natural</i>
Rep. Linda Dean Campbell, MA	Sen. Martha Fuller Clark, NH	<i>Resources Committee</i>
Rep. Margaret Campbell, MT	Sen. Hansen Clarke, MI	Rep. Frank Davis, NH
<i>House Majority Floor Leader</i>	Rep. Richard Cleary, ME	Rep. Susan Hatch Davis, VT
Rep. Karen Camper, TN	Rep. Brian Clem, OR	Rep. Will Davis, IL
Rep. Ben Cannon, OR	<i>Chair, Agriculture, Natural</i>	Rep. Yvonne Davis, TX
<i>Chair, Environment and Water,</i>	<i>Resources and Rural Communities</i>	Rep. Jim Davnie, MN
<i>Committee</i>	<i>Committee</i>	Sen. Deborah Dawkins, MS
Rep. Michael Carey, ME	Rep. Lorene Coates, NC	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment Protection,</i>
Sen. Jim Carlson, MN	Rep. Eileen Cody, WA	<i>Conservation and Water Resources</i>
Rep. Lyndon Carlson, MN	Rep. Denny Coffman, HI	<i>Committee</i>
Rep. Reuven Carlyle, WA	<i>Vice-Chair, Energy & Environmental</i>	Rep. John Day, IN
	<i>Protection Committee</i>	Assm. Hector De La Torre, CA

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Assm. Kevin de León, CA	Sen. Bob Dvorsky, IA	Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante, MA
Rep. Robert Dean, MI	Rep. Carolyn C. Dykema, MA	Assm. Mike Feuer, CA
Assm. Wayne DeAngelo, NJ	Rep. Beverly Earle, NC	Sen. Thomas Fiebiger, ND
<i>Vice-Chair, Telecommunications and</i>	Rep. Robert Eaton, ME	Rep. Edward Finch, ME
<i>Utilities Committee</i>	Del. Adam Ebbin, VA	Rep. Barry R. Finegold, MA
Rep. David Deen, VT	Rep. Jane Eberle, ME	<i>Chair, Joint Committee on</i>
<i>Chair, Fish, Wildlife and Water</i>	Rep. Bob Ebinger, MT	<i>Telecommunication, Utilities, and</i>
<i>Resources Committee</i>	Rep. Kate Ebl, MI	<i>Energy</i>
Rep. Ed DeLaney, IN	Rep. David Edwards, OR	Rep. Randy Fischer, CO
Sen. George Della, MD	Sen. John S. Edwards, VA	<i>Deputy Majority Whip</i>
Rep. Michael Dembrow, OR	Rep. Sarah Edwards, VT	Sen. Stephen Fischmann, NM
Rep. Paul Dennert, SD	Rep. Lori A. Ehrlich, MA	<i>Vice-Chair, Science, Technology and</i>
<i>Assistant Minority Leader</i>	Sen. James B. Eldridge, MA	<i>Telecommunications Committee</i>
Rep. Eugene DePasquale, PA	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment, Natural</i>	Rep. Michael Fisher, VT
Sen. Mark DeSaulnier, CA	<i>Resources, and Agriculture</i>	Rep. Susan Fisher, NC
Sen. Ted Deutch, FL	<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Sean Flaherty, ME
<i>Vice-Chair, Regulated Industries</i>	Rep. Elaine Elliot, SD	Sen. Jennifer L. Flanagan, MA
<i>Committee</i>	Sen. Rodney Ellis, TX	Rep. John Fleming, MT
Sen. Bill Diamond, ME	Rep. Rich Engels, SD	Rep. Patricia Fleming, AZ
Sen. D. Scott Dibble, MN	Rep. Bob England, NC	Rep. Elspeth "Elsie" Flemings, ME
<i>Chair, Transit Subdivision</i>	Rep. Kirk England, TX	Assm. Nathan Fletcher, CA
Rep. Sue Dickenson, MT	Assm. Steven Englebright, NY	Sen. Dean Florez, CA
Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson, WA	Del. David Englin, VA	<i>Majority Leader</i>
Rep. Cynthia Dill, ME	Rep. Vicki Englund, MO	Rep. Mike Foley, OH
Sen. Jackie Dingfelder, OR	Rep. Mark Ericks, WA	Assm. Paul Fong, CA
<i>Chair, Environment and Natural</i>	Sen. Ron Erickson, MT	Sen. Jennie Forehand, MD
<i>Resources Committee</i>	Sen. Sharon Erickson Ropes, MN	Sen. Tony Foriest, NC
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Rep. Margaret Doherty, OR	<i>Veterans Committee</i>	Rep. Les Fossel, ME
Sen. John Doll, MN	Sen. Jon Erpenbach, WI	Sen. Joyce Foster, CO
<i>Vice-Chair, Energy, Utilities,</i>	Sen. Sue Errington, IN	Rep. K. Jerry Frangas, CO
<i>Technology and Communications</i>	Sen. Will Espero, HI	<i>Vice-Chair Transportation and</i>
<i>Committee</i>	<i>Chair, Public Safety and Military</i>	<i>Energy Committee</i>
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Rep. Johannah Donovan, VT	Rep. Mark Eves, ME	Sen. Rosa Franklin, WA
Sen. Katie G. Dorsett, NC	Sen. Darlene Fairley, WA	Rep. Jack Franks, IL
<i>Co-Chair, Select Committee on</i>	Rep. Andrew Falk, MN	Sen. Karen Fraser, WA
<i>Energy, Science and Technology</i>	<i>Vice Chair, Energy Finance and</i>	Rep. Lew Frederick, OR
Rep. Stacy Dostie, ME	<i>Policy Committee</i>	Rep. Barbara French, NH
Sen. William Dotzler, IA	Rep. Mark V. Falzone, MA	Rep. Eldred French, VT
Rep. Denise Driehaus, OH	Rep. Mitch Fargen, SD	Rep. Julie French, MT
<i>Vice-Chair, Economic Development,</i>	Sen. Susan C. Fargo, MA	<i>Chair, Agriculture Committee</i>
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Joe Farias, TX	Rep. Patsy French, VT
Rep. John Driscoll, WA	Rep. Steve Farley, AZ	Rep. Jason Frerichs, SD
Rep. Robyn Driscoll, MT	Rep. Jean Farmer-Butterfield, NC	Rep. Marcie Frevert, IA
Rep. Tim Driscoll, ME	Rep. Jessica Farrar, TX	Rep. Carol Friedrich, NH
Rep. Paul Drucker, PA	<i>Vice-Chair, Land and Resource</i>	Rep. Patti Fritz, MN
Rep. Robert Duchesne, ME	<i>Management Committee</i>	Rep. Paul Froehlich, IL
<i>House Chair, Joint Standing</i>	Sen. Teresa Fedor, OH	Sen. Brian Frosh, MD
<i>Committee on Natural Resources</i>	Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, IL	Del. Barbara Frush, MD
Sen. Bob Duff, CT	Rep. Marc Feinstein, SD	<i>Chair, Environment subcommittee</i>
Rep. Dawanna Dukes, TX	Sen. Dede Feldman, NM	Rep. Tim Furey, MT
Rep. Jim Dunnam, TX	Sen. Jim Ferlo, PA	Sen. Mike Gabbard, HI
Rep. Hans Dunshee, WA	Rep. Mark Ferrandino, CO	<i>Chair, Energy and Environment</i>
		<i>Committee</i>

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Rep. Pete Gallego, TX	Rep. Deborah Graham, IL	Rep. Suzanne Harvey, NH
Sen. Mario Gallegos, TX	<i>Chair, Renewable Energy Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Science, Technology and</i>
Sen. Brickwood Galuteria, HI	Rep. Mary Grant, MA	<i>Energy Committee</i>
Sen. Rob Garagiola, MD	Rep. Anne Grassie, NH	Rep. Anne Haskell, ME
<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>	Sen. Josh Green, HI	Sen. Jack Hatch, IA
Rep. Sean Garballey, MA	Rep. Tami Green, WA	Rep. Harold Haugh, MI
Sen. Jorge Luis Garcia, AZ	Rep. Mitch Greenlick, OR	Sen. Bob Hawks, MT
<i>Minority Leader</i>	Assm. Linda Greenstein, NJ	Rep. Jeff Hayden, MN
Rep. Martha Garcia, AZ	Rep. Mindy Greiling, MN	Rep. Teresea Hayes, ME
Sen. Mary Jane Garcia, NM	Sen. Eric Griego, NM	Rep. Helen Head, VT
Rep. Miguel Garcia, NM	Rep. Chris Griffin, ND	Rep. Chris Heagarty, NC
Rep. Pat Gardner, GA	Rep. Wanda Grinde, MT	Del. Anne Healey, MD
Rep. Paul Gardner, MN	Rep. Edmund Gruchalla, ND	Sen. Rollie Heath, CO
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment Policy and</i>	Assm. Reed Gusciora, NJ	Del. Sue Hecht, MD
<i>Oversight Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Solid</i>	<i>Deputy Majority Whip</i>
Rep. Chris Garrett, OR	<i>Waste Committee</i>	Rep. Matt Heinz, AZ
Sen. Susan Garrett, IL	Del. Nancy Guthrie, WV	Rep. Bill Heller, FL
<i>Chair, Environment Committee</i>	Del. Ana Sol Gutierrez, MD	Sen. Margaret Rose Henry, DE
Sen. Linda Garrou, NC	Rep. Joni Gutierrez, NM	<i>Senate Majority Whip</i>
Rep. Mary Gaskill, IA	Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, WA	Rep. Teresa Henry, MT
Rep. Elesha Gayman, IA	<i>Chair, Community and Economic</i>	Rep. Ana Hernandez, TX
Rep. Douglas A. Geiss, MI	<i>Development and Trade Committee</i>	Rep. Lisa Hernandez, IL
<i>Vice-Chair, Energy and Technology</i>	Sen. Ken Haar, NE	Del. Charniele Herring, VA
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Sandy Haas, VT	Rep. Elfreda Higgins, ID
Sen. Dan Gelber, FL	Rep. Jennifer Haase, MI	Sen. Linda Higgins, MN
<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce Committee</i>	Rep. Robert Hagan, OH	Rep. Steve Hilgenberg, WI
Rep. Sara Gelser, OR	<i>Chair, Transportation and</i>	Assm. Jerry Hill, CA
Sen. Stan Gerzofsky, ME	<i>Infrastructure Committee</i>	Rep. Debra Hilstrom, MN
Rep. Karen Giannini, NM	Rep. Phil Haire, NC	Rep. Bill Hilty, MN
Rep. Peggy Gibson, SD	Rep. Larry Hall, NC	<i>Chair, Energy Finance and Policy</i>
Rep. Paul Gilbert, ME	Sen. Bethany Hall-Long, DE	<i>Committee</i>
Rep. Rosa Gill, NC	Rep. Robin Hamilton, MT	Rep. Jon Hinck, ME
Rep. Brenda Gilmore, TN	Rep. Christine Hamm, NH	<i>Chair, Utilities and Energy</i>
Rep. Ruth Ginsburg, NH	Rep. Jill Shaffer Hammond, NH	<i>Committee</i>
Rep. Eliot Glassheim, ND	Rep. Julie Hamos, IL	Rep. Gordon Hintz, WI
Rep. Rick Glazier, NC	<i>Chair, Mass Transit Committee</i>	Sen. Barry Hobbins, ME
Del. Cheryl Glenn, MD	Sen. Loni Hancock, CA	<i>Chair, Utilities and Energy</i>
Rep. Anne Gobi, MA	Rep. Betsy Hands, MT	<i>Committee</i>
Rep. Bruce Goforth, NC	Rep. Arthur Handy, RI	Sen. Steve Hobbs, WA
<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce, Small</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, House Committee on</i>	Rep. Terri Hodge, TX
<i>Business, and Entrepreneurship</i>	<i>Environment and Natural Resources</i>	Rep. Kevin Hodges, NH
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Faye Hanohano, HI	Rep. Jay Hoffman, IL
Rep. Lee Gonzales, MI	Rep. Rick Hansen, MN	Sen. Rob Hogg, IA
Sen. Seth Goodall, ME	Rep. Valerie Hardy, NH	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment & Energy</i>
<i>Senate Chair, Joint Standing</i>	Rep. Chris Harker, OR	<i>Independence Committee</i>
<i>Committee on Natural Resources</i>	Rep. Patrick Harkins, PA	Rep. Thomas Holbrook, IL
Rep. Adam Goode, ME	Rep. Charles Harlow, ME	<i>Chair, Environment & Energy</i>
Rep. Roger Goodman, WA	Sen. Don Harmon, IL	<i>Committee</i>
Sen. Bob Gordon, NJ	Rep. Greg Harris, IL	Rep. Frank Holden, NH
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Energy</i>	Rep. Marian Harris, OH	Rep. Galen Hollenbaugh, MT
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Pricey Harrison, NC	<i>Chair, Joint Appropriations</i>
Rep. James Gordon, AL	<i>Chair, Appropriations</i>	<i>Subcommittee on Natural</i>
Sen. Steve Goss, NC	<i>Subcommittee on Natural and</i>	<i>Resources and Transportation</i>
Rep. Suzanne Gottling, NH	<i>Economic Resources</i>	Rep. Rick Holman, ND
Rep. Jay P. Goyal, OH	Rep. Philip Harvey, NH	Sen. Linda Holmes, IL
<i>Majority Whip</i>		<i>Vice-Chair, Labor Committee</i>

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Sen. Jim Holperin, WI <i>Chair, Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry, and Natural Resources</i>	Rep. Mitzi Johnson, VT Rep. Sheldon Johnson, MN Rep. William Johnson, NH Sen. Mike Johnston, CO Del. Adrienne Jones, MD <i>Speaker Pro Tem</i> Rep. Earl Jones, NC <i>Vice-Chair, Science and Technology Committee</i>	Rep. Beth Kerttula, AK <i>House Minority Leader</i> Rep. Lynn Kessler, WA <i>Majority Leader</i> Rep. Kay Khan, MA Sen. Michelle Kidani, HI Rep. Ryan Kiesel, OK Rep. Bill Killen, ID <i>Minority Caucus Chair</i>
Rep. Jason Holsman, MO Rep. Paul Holvey, OR Sen. Gary Hooser, HI Del. Patrick Hope, VA Rep. Frank Hornstein, MN <i>Chair, Transit and Transportation Policy Committee</i>	Sen. Kenneth Wayne Jones, MS Rep. Patricia Jones, ME Rep. Robert B. Jones, MI Rep. Andy Jorgensen, WI <i>Chair, Renewable Energy and Rural Affairs Committee</i>	Rep. Kevin Killer, SD Rep. Phyllis King, ID Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, NC <i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Committee</i>
Rep. Timothy Horrigan, NH Rep. Melissa Hortman, MN <i>Assistant Majority Leader</i> Rep. Larry Hosch, MN <i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Peter(Pete) Jorgensen, WY Rep. Babette Josephs, PA Rep. Joel Judd, CO Sen. Charlie Justice, FL <i>Minority Leader Pro Tempore</i>	Rep. Patrick Kirschman, SD Rep. Warren F. Kitzmiller, VT <i>Chair, Commerce and Economic Development Committee</i>
Sen. Matthew Houde, NH Rep. Steve Howard, VT Sen. Janet Howell, VA Del. James Hubbard, MD <i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Naida Kaen, NH <i>Chair, Science, Technology and Energy Committee</i>	Sen. Adam Kline, WA Rep. Sheila Klinker, IN Sen. Frank Kloucek, SD Rep. Kate Knuth, MN <i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>
Sen. Evie Hudak, CO Rep. Zachary Hudgins, WA Assm. Jared Huffman, CA Rep. Sandra Spaulding Hughes, NC Rep. Dickey Lee Hullinghorst, CO Rep. Bernie Hunhoff, SD <i>Minority Leader</i>	Rep. Bryan Kaenrath, ME Rep. Louis L. Kafka, MA Rep. Daniel Kagan, CO Rep. Ruth Kagi, WA Rep. Nick Kahl, OR Rep. Phyllis Kahn, MN Del. Anne Kaiser, MD Rep. Margaret Kaiser, GA Rep. Jeremy Kalin, MN Rep. Andrew Kandrevas, MI Rep. Jay Kaufman, MA Sen. Christine Kaufmann, MT Assm. Brian Kavanagh, NY Rep. Jerry Kearns, IA <i>Vice-Chair, Environmental Protection Committee</i>	Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles, WA Sen. Russell Kokubun, HI Rep. Angeline Kopka, NH Del. Kaye Kory, VA Rep. Tina Kotek, OR Rep. John Kowalko, DE Rep. Joseph Koziura, OH Rep. Bob Kressig, IA Rep. Joe Kroeber, ND Rep. Chuck Kruger, ME Sen. Gary Kubly, MN <i>Chair, Energy Finance Subdivision</i>
Rep. Robert Hunt, ME Rep. Sam Hunt, WA Rep. Chuck Hunter, MT Sen. Mattie Hunter, IL Rep. Ross Hunter, WA Rep. Thomas Huntley, MN Assm. Valerie Vainieri Huttie, NJ Sen. Les Ihara, HI Rep. Melissa Walsh Innes, ME Rep. Ed Iron Cloud III, SD Rep. Chuck Isenhardt, IA Rep. Jim Jacks, WA Rep. Darren Jackson, NC Sen. Robert L. Jackson, MS Sen. Troy Jackson, ME Rep. Naomi Jakobsson, IL Sen. Harold Janeway, NH Rep. Wendy Jaquet, ID Rep. Maggie Jeffus, NC Sen. Patricia Jehlen, MA Sen. Larry Jent, MT Rep. Tim Jerman, VT Sen. Sandy Jerstad, SD Rep. Willem Jewett, VT Sen. Pam Jochum, IA Rep. Christine A. Johnson, UT Sen. David Johnson, AR	Rep. Helene Keeley, DE Rep. Kathleen Keenan, VT Rep. John Kefalas, CO Sen. Christine Kehoe, CA Rep. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, HI Sen. Ken Kelash, MN Sen. Maryanne Keller, CO Sen. Tim Keller, NM Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher, MN <i>Speaker of the House</i> Rep. Scot Kelsh, ND Rep. Deb Kennedy, MI Sen. Thomas Kennedy, MA Rep. Peter Kent, ME Rep. Andy Kerr, CO <i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Mark Kuhn, IA Rep. Gail Kulick Jackson, MN Rep. Stephen Kulik, MA Rep. Jeanne Labuda, CO Del. Stephen Lafferty, MD Rep. Carolyn Laine, MN Rep. Mike Lajoie, ME Rep. Sara Lampe, MO Rep. Lou Lang, IL Rep. Gerald Lange, SD Rep. William Lantigua, MA Sen. Cliff Larsen, MT Sen. Sylvia Larsen, NH <i>President of the Senate</i> Rep. Mark Larson, VT Sen. Ron Latz, MN Rep. Elaine Lauterborn, NH Sen. Alfred Lawson, Jr. <i>Senate Minority Leader</i>

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Rep. Linda Lawson, IN	Rep. Paul Luebke, NC	Rep. Dave McAlpin, MT
Sen. Daylin Leach, PA	Rep. David Lujan, AZ	<i>Vice-Chair, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee</i>
Rep. Chris Lee, HI	<i>House Minority Leader</i>	Rep. Jeff McCabe, ME
Rep. Marilyn Lee, HI	Rep. Ben Lujan, Sr., NM	Rep. Beth McCann, CO
<i>Majority Whip</i>	<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Rep. Edie McClafferty, MT
Del. Susan Lee, MD	Rep. Sylvia Luke, HI	Rep. Jim McClammer, NH
Rep. Edward Legg, ME	Assm. Donna Lupardo, NY	Del. Jennifer McClellan, VA
Sen. John Lehman, WI	Sen. Virginia Lyons, VT	Rep. Ruth McClendon, TX
Rep. Gabe Leland, MI	<i>Chair, Natural Resources and Energy Committee</i>	Rep. David McCluskey, CT
Rep. Joan Lenes, VT	Rep. Bruce MacDonald, ME	<i>Deputy Speaker of the House</i>
Sen. Mike Lenett, MD	Rep. Margaret MacDonald, MT	Rep. John McCoy, WA
<i>Chair, Special Committee on Renewables and Clean Energy</i>	Rep. Nick Mackey, NC	<i>Chair, Technology, Energy and Communication Committee</i>
Sen. Mark Leno, CA	Rep. James Roger Madalena, NM	Sen. Matt McCoy, IA
Rep. Bryan Lentz, PA	<i>Chair, Energy and Natural Resources Committee</i>	Sen. Harris B. McDowell, III, DE
Rep. Lucy Leriche, VT	Sen. Richard Madaleno, Jr., MD	<i>Chair, Energy and Transit Committee</i>
<i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Sen. Sue Madison, AR	Sen. Donald McEachin, VA
Rep. Matthew Lesser, CT	Rep. Antonio "Moe" Maestas, NM	Rep. Buffie McFadyen, CO
Rep. Tom Letson, OH	Rep. Michael Magaoay, HI	<i>Speaker Pro-Tem</i>
Rep. David Levdansky, PA	Rep. Veronica Magnan, ME	Sen. Amanda McGill, NE
Sen. Phil Leventis, SC	Rep. Sue Malek, MT	Del. Maggie McIntosh, MD
Rep. Melanie Levesque, NH	Rep. Liz Malia, MA	<i>Chair, Environmental Matters Committee</i>
Rep. Paul LeVota, MO	Rep. Dale Mallory, OH	Assm. John McKeon, NJ
<i>Minority Floor Leader</i>	<i>Chair, Environment and Brownfield Development Committee</i>	<i>Chair, Environment and Solid Waste Committee</i>
Rep. Claire Levy, CO	Rep. Kathy Manderino, PA	Sen. Floyd McKissick, NC
<i>Majority Whip</i>	Del. Roger Manno, MD	<i>Co-Chair, Appropriations on Natural and Economic Resources Committee</i>
Rep. Jason Lewis, MA	Rep. Carlos Mariani, MN	Rep. Marian McLawhorn, NC
Rep. Tina Liebling, MN	Rep. Pedro Marin, GA	Rep. Ricia McMahon, NH
Rep. Bernard Lieder, MN	Sen. Henry Marsh, VA	Rep. Paul McMurtry, MA
<i>Chair, Transportation Finance Committee</i>	Rep. Seth Marshall, NH	Rep. Margo McNeil, MO
Rep. Marko Liias, WA	Rep. Cynthia Martin, VT	Sen. Cisco McSorley, NM
Rep. Leon Lillie, MN	Rep. Grier Martin, NC	Rep. Mark Meadows, MI
<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce and Labor Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Homeland Security, Military, and Veterans Affairs Committee</i>	Rep. Reginald Meeks, KY
Sen. Terry Link, IL	Rep. James "Jim" Martin, ME	Rep. Robert Megna, CT
<i>Majority Caucus Whip</i>	Rep. Barbara Marumoto, HI	Rep. Robert Mehlhoff, MT
Rep. Ellen Lipton, MI	Sen. John Marty, MN	Rep. Deborah Mell, IL
Rep. Carolyn Lisle, NH	Rep. Sandra Masin, MN	Sen. Heath Mello, NE
Rep. Lesia Liss, MI	Rep. Jim Masland, VT	Rep. Mike Menahan, MT
Sen. Carol Liu, CA	Rep. Cory Mason, WI	Rep. Susana Mendoza, IL
Rep. Diane Loeffler, MN	Rep. Barbara Massey Reece, GA	<i>Chair, International Trade & Commerce Committee</i>
<i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Anthony Matarazzo, NH	Sen. Pam Merchant, SD
Rep. Phil Lopes, AZ	Sen. Tim Mathern, ND	Rep. Michael Merrifield, CO
Sen. Linda Lopez, AZ	Rep. Robert Matheson, NH	Sen. Amanda Merrill, NH
<i>Minority Whip</i>	Rep. Marcie Maxwell, WA	Rep. Eric Meyer, AZ
Rep. Jason Lorber, VT	Rep. Tracy Maxwell Heard, OH	Rep. Aaron M. Michlewitz, MA
Rep. Stephen Lovejoy, ME	<i>Majority Floor Leader</i>	Rep. Rick Miera, NM
Sen. Alan Lowenthal, CA	Rep. Karen May, IL	Rep. Joe Miklosi, CO
Assm. Bonnie Lowenthal, CA	<i>Chair, Environmental Health Committee</i>	Rep. Alice Miller, VT
Sen. Louise Lucas, VA	Rep. Edward Mazurek, ME	
Rep. Marvin Lucas, NC	Rep. Al McAffrey, OK	
Sen. Eddie Lucio, TX		
<i>Chair, International Relations and Trade Committee</i>		

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Sen. Dale Miller, OH	Sen. Gloria Negrete McLeod, CA	Rep. Derek Owen, NH
Rep. Elizabeth Miller, ME	<i>Chair, Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee</i>	Rep. Sal Pace, CO
Rep. Fred Miller, MI	Rep. Elaine Nekritz, IL	Rep. Sharon Pace, MO
Sen. John Miller, VA	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment & Energy Committee</i>	Sen. Marc Pacheco, MA
Del. Paula Miller, VA	Sen. Carolyn Nelson, ND	<i>Chair, Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change</i>
Rep. Nick Milroy, WI	<i>Assistant Minority Leader</i>	Sen. Frank Padavan, NY
Rep. Sue Minter, VT	Rep. Jon Nelson, ND	Rep. Mark Pafford, FL
Rep. Bonnie Mitchell, NH	Rep. Mary Pennell Nelson, ME	Rep. Lynne Pancrazi, AZ
Sen. Libby Mitchell, ME	Rep. Sharon Nelson, WA	Sen. Sandra Pappas, MN
<i>Senate President</i>	Sen. Linda Newell, CO	Rep. Joe Parisi, WI
Rep. Mark Mitchell, VT	Rep. Stacey Newman, MO	Rep. Al Park, NM
Rep. Wayne T. Mitchell, ME	Rep. Jerry Newton, MN	Rep. Cherelle Parker, PA
Rep. J. Larry Mitchell, DE	Sen. Clarence Nishihara, HI	Rep. Sandy Pasch, WI
Rep. Annie Mobley, NC	Rep. Mary Nolan, OR	Rep. Anne Pasley-Stuart, ID
Rep. Corey Mock, ND	<i>Chair, Land Use Committee</i>	Rep. Beatriz Pastor, NH
Rep. Jim Moeller, WA	Rep. Pat Noonan, MT	Rep. Matthew C. Patrick, MA
<i>Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore</i>	Rep. Susi Nord, NH	Rep. Matt Patten, OH
Assm. Bill Monning, CA	Rep. Terie Norelli, NH	<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce and Labor, Committee</i>
Del. Karen Montgomery, MD	<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Rep. Daniel Patterson, AZ
<i>Vice-Chair, Land Use and Transportation Committee</i>	Sen. Ralph S. Northam, VA	Sen. Fran Pavley, CA
Rep. Michael J. Moran, MA	Sen. John Nutting, ME	<i>Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee</i>
Rep. Mike Moran, OH	Rep. Eldon Nygaard, SD	Rep. Michael Paymar, MN
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Brownfield Development Committee</i>	<i>Minority Whip</i>	Rep. Tony Payton Jr., PA
Sen. Sue Morano, OH	Rep. Al O'Brien, WA	Rep. Sarah K. Peake, MA
Rep. Will Morgan, MN	Rep. Andrew O'Brien, ME	Rep. Jamie Pedersen, WA
Del. Dan Morhaim, MD	Rep. Anne O'Brien, VT	Rep. Alice H. Peisch, MA
<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Mike O'Brien, PA	Rep. Scott Pelath, IN
Rep. Hermina Morita, HI	Rep. Bill O'Neill, NM	Rep. Kathy Pellett, VT
<i>Chair, Energy & Environmental Protection Committee</i>	Rep. Jim O'Rourke, CT	Rep. Gene Pelowski, MN
Rep. Dawn Morrell, WA	<i>Deputy Speaker of the House</i>	Del. Joseline Peña-Melnyk, MD
<i>Democratic Caucus Chair</i>	Sen. Rick Olseen, MN	Rep. Donna Pence, ID
Rep. Terry Morrison, ME	Sen. Dennis Olshove, MI	Rep. Peggy Pendleton, ME
Del. Joe Morrissey, VA	<i>Vice-Chair, Energy Policy and Public Utilities Committee</i>	Rep. Cherylin Peniston, CO
Sen. Michael W. Morrissey, MA	Rep. Donovan Olson, IA	Rep. Ann Peoples, ME
<i>Chair, Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy Committee</i>	<i>Chair, Environmental Protection Committee</i>	Rep. Leila Percy, ME
Sen. John Morse, CO	Sen. Mary Olson, MN	Assm. V. Manuel Perez, CA
<i>Senate Majority Leader</i>	Del. John Olszewski, Jr., MD	Rep. Anne Perry, ME
Sen. Lynda Moss, MT	Rep. Timm Ormsby, WA	Sen. Joe Perry, ME
Sen. Mee Moua, MN	<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee</i>	Rep. John Persell, MN
Rep. Mike Mrowicki, VT	Sen. Nan Orrock, GA	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division Committee</i>
Rep. Joe Mullery, MN	<i>Vice-Chair, Interstate Cooperation Committee</i>	Sen. Chap Petersen, VA
Rep. Erin Murphy, MN	Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino, NM	Sen. Karen Peterson, DE
<i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Solomon Ortiz, Jr, TX	Rep. Matthew Peterson, ME
Rep. Dennis Murray, OH	Rep. Tina Orwall, WA	Rep. Eric Pettigrew, WA
Rep. Lee Myxter, ND	Rep. Marcus Oshiro, HI	Rep. Phil Pflum, IN
Rep. Elliott Naishtat, TX	Rep. Harry Osterman, IL	<i>Chair, Agriculture & Rural Development Committee</i>
Rep. Mark Nakashima, HI	<i>Chair, Labor Committee</i>	Rep. Eber Phelps, KS
Rep. Nancy Nathanson, OR	Rep. Jeanette Mott Oxford, MO	Rep. Mike Phillips, MT
Sen. Cynthia Nava, NM		<i>House Majority Caucus Leader</i>
Assm. Pedro Nava, CA		
Rep. Floyd Nease, VT		
<i>Majority Leader</i>		

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Rep. Danice Picraux, NM	Sen. Kevin Ranker, WA	Rep. Christine Rolfes, WA
Rep. Wendy Pieh, ME	<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture & Rural</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Ecology and Parks</i>
Rep. Garland Pierce, NC	<i>Economic Development Committee</i>	<i>Committee</i>
Rep. Matt Pierce, IN	Rep. Helen Rankin, ME	Sen. Gloria Romero, CA
<i>Vice-Chair, Commerce, Energy &</i>	Rep. Ray Rapp, NC	Rep. Jeff Roorda, MO
<i>Technology Committee</i>	Sen. Jamin "Jamie" Raskin, MD	<i>Minority Whip</i>
Rep. Sandy Pihos, IL	<i>Co-Chair, Maryland Clean Car and</i>	Sen. James Rosapepe, MD
Rep. Connie Pillich, OH	<i>Energy Policy Task Force</i>	<i>Assistant Deputy Majority Whip</i>
Rep. James Pilliod, NH	Rep. Robin Read, NH	Sen. Diane Rosenbaum, OR
Rep. Donald Pilon, ME	Rep. Tobias Read, OR	<i>Chair, Commerce and Workforce</i>
Rep. Kymberly Pine, HI	<i>Chair, Sustainability and Economic</i>	<i>Development Committee</i>
Rep. Hannah Pingree, ME	<i>Development Committee</i>	Del. Samuel
<i>Speaker of the House</i>	Rep. Harry Readshaw, PA	"Sandy" Rosenberg, MD
Rep. Wright Pinkham, ME	Sen. Debbie Regala, WA	Rep. Deborah Ross, NC
Sen. Paul Pinsky, MD	Rep. Michelle	Del. Justin Ross, MD
<i>Chair, Environment Subcommittee</i>	Rehwinkel Vasilinda, FL	<i>Chief Deputy Majority Whip</i>
Rep. John Piotti, ME	Rep. Nathan Reichert, IA	Rep. Margaret Rotundo, ME
<i>House Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Roger Reinert, MN	Rep. J. David Roundstone, MT
Del. Ken Plum, VA	Rep. Michele Reinhart, MT	Rep. Richard Roy, CT
Rep. Mark Pocan, WI	<i>Vice-Chair, Business and Labor</i>	Rep. Kelda Helen Roys, WI
Rep. Paul Poirier, VT	Sen. Ann Rest, MN	Sen. Sandy Rummel, MN
Del. Albert Pollard, VA	Rep. Amy Rice, RI	Rep. Byron Rushing, MA
Sen. Jim Pomeroy, ND	<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>	Assm. Ira Ruskin, CA
Rep. Jack Pommer, CO	Sen. Andrew Rice, OK	Rep. Diane Russell, ME
Rep. Jennifer Ponnichowski, CT	Del. Craig Rice, MD	Rep. Trinka Russell, NH
<i>Vice-Chair, Natural Resources</i>	Rep. Joe Rice, CO	Rep. Maria Ruud, MN
Rep. Sondy Pope-Roberts, WI	Sen. Nan Rich, FL	Rep. Su Ryden, CO
Assm. Anthony Portantino, CA	<i>Vice-Chair, Policy and Steering</i>	Rep. Mark Ryder, NH
Rep. Gregory Porter, IN	<i>Committee on Energy, Environment,</i>	Rep. Tara Sad, NH
Rep. Ari Abraham Porth, FL	<i>and Land Use</i>	<i>Chair, Environment and</i>
Rep. Fran Potter, NH	Rep. Jon Richards, WI	<i>Agriculture Committee</i>
Rep. Weezie Potter, ND	Rep. Gary Richardson, NH	Rep. Scott Saiki, HI
Sen. Edith Prague, CT	Rep. Pam Richardson, MA	Rep. Brita Sailer, MN
Rep. Benjamin Pratt, ME	Rep. Gail Riecken, IN	<i>Vice-Chair, Game, Fish and Forestry</i>
Sen. Margarita Prentice, WA	Rep. Jim Riesberg, CO	<i>Division</i>
Rep. Philip Preston, NH	Rep. Al Riley, IL	Assm. Mary Salas, CA
Sen. Yvonne Prettner Solon, MN	Rep. Chuck Riley, OR	Assm. Lori Saldaña, CA
<i>Chair, Energy, Utilities, Technology</i>	Sen. Jeremy Ring, FL	<i>Assembly Speaker Pro-Tem</i>
<i>and Communications Committee</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Select Committee on</i>	Sen. Mary Anne Salmon, AR
Sen. Craig Pridemore, WA	<i>Florida's Economy</i>	Rep. Linda Sanborn, ME
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment, Water and</i>	Rep. Shirley Ringo, ID	Rep. Edward Sandoval, NM
<i>Energy Committee</i>	Sen. Rebecca Rios, AZ	Rep. Steve Santarsiero, PA
Rep. Charles Priest, ME	<i>Assistant Minority Leader</i>	Rep. Dante Santoni, PA
Rep. Bob Pritchard, IL	Sen. Fred Risser, WI	Sen. Tom Saxhaug, MN
Rep. Denise Provost, MA	<i>President of the Senate</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment, Energy and</i>
Sen. Floyd Prozanski, OR	Rep. Mary Helen Roberts, WA	<i>Natural Resources Budget Division</i>
Rep. Cherrish Pryor, IN	Rep. Sarah Roberts, MI	Rep. George Sayler, ID
Rep. Raymond Pryor, OH	Sen. Judy Robson, WI	Rep. Bev Scalze, MN
Sen. Linda T. "Toddy" Puller, VA	Sen. Phil Rockefeller, WA	Rep. Christine Scanlan, CO
Sen. William Purcell, NC	<i>Chair, Environment, Water &</i>	Rep. Sue Schafer, CO
Rep. Kesha Ram, VT	<i>Energy Committee</i>	Rep. David Schapira, AZ
Del. Victor Ramirez, MD	Rep. Benjamin Rodefer, NM	Rep. James Schatz, ME
Assm. Rubin Ramos Jr., NJ	Rep. Eddie Rodriguez, TX	Sen. Linda Scheid, MN
Rep. Peter Ramsey, NH	Rep. James Roebuck, PA	Rep. Ed Schieffer, MO
Rep. Scott Randolph, FL		Rep. Donna Schlachman, NH

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Rep. Peter Schmidt, NH	Sen. Charlie Smith Dannelly, NC	Rep. Cullie Tarleton, NC
Sen. Becky Schmitz, IA	Rep. Frank Smizik, MA	<i>Chair, Water Resources and</i>
Sen. Elizabeth Schneider, ME	<i>Chair, House Committee on Global</i>	<i>Infrastructure Committee</i>
Sen. Mac Schneider, ND	<i>Warming and Climate Change</i>	Sen. Christine Tartaglione, PA
Rep. Marlin Schneider, WI	Assm. Cameron Smyth, CA	Sen. Greg Taylor, IN
Sen. Brian Schoenjahn, IA	Sen. Eleanor Sobel, FL	Rep. Rick Taylor, PA
Rep. Teresa Schooley, DE	Sen. David Sokola, DE	Rep. Andre Thapedi, IL
Rep. Dianne Schuett, NH	Rep. Judy Solano, CO	Rep. Phyllis Thede, IA
Rep. John W. Scibak, MA	Rep. Darrell Solberg, SD	Rep. Charles Kenneth Theriault, ME
Rep. Carl M. Sciortino Jr., MA	Rep. Darren Soto, FL	Rep. Kristi Thibaut, TX
Del. Jim Scott, VA	Rep. Judith Spang, NH	Rep. Cynthia Thielen, HI
Rep. Dan Scripps, MI	<i>Chair, Resources, Recreation and</i>	<i>Assistant House Minority Leader</i>
Rep. Larry Seaquist, WA	<i>Development Committee</i>	Rep. Brian Thomas, GA
Rep. Mike Sells, WA	Rep. Kristy Spengler, VT	Sen. Buzz Thomas, MI
Rep. Tony Sertich, MN	Sen. Karen E. Spilka, MA	<i>Minority Floor Leader</i>
<i>House Majority Leader</i>	Sen. Carolyn Squires, MT	Rep. Jack Thomas, NM
Rep. Jon Sesso, MT	Sen. Pat Steadman, CO	Sen. Antoine M. Thompson, NY
Sen. Brandon Shaffer, CO	Sen. Heather Steans, IL	<i>Chair, Environmental Conservation</i>
<i>President of the Senate</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Environment</i>	<i>Committee</i>
Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, TX	<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Bill Thompson, SD
<i>Vice-Chair, Veteran Affairs and</i>	Rep. Sharon Steckman, IA	Sen. Patricia S. "Patsy" Ticer, VA
<i>Military Installations Committee</i>	Rep. Cheryl Steenson, MT	<i>Chair, Agriculture, Conservation</i>
Rep. Dave Sharpe, VT	Del. Dana Stein, MD	<i>and Natural Resources Committee</i>
Rep. Michael Shaw, ME	Sen. Josh Stein, NC	Rep. George Till, VT
Sen. Kathy Sheran, MN	Rep. Richard Steinberg, FL	Rep. Joy K. Tilton, NH
Rep. Maile Shimabukuro, HI	Rep. Jeff Steinborn, NM	Rep. Rashida Tlaib, MI
Rep. Stephen Shurtleff, NH	Rep. Sara Stevens, ME	Rep. Nancy Todd, CO
Del. Mark Sickles, VA	Rep. Mimi Stewart, NM	Rep. Patricia Todd, AL
Rep. Steve Simon, MN	<i>Chair, Health and Government</i>	Sen. Steven A. Tolman, MA
<i>Assistant Majority Leader</i>	<i>Affairs Committee</i>	Rep. Joe Tolson, NC
Sen. Deb Simpson, ME	Rep. Dan Stewart, OH	<i>Vice-Chair, Energy and</i>
Rep. Geoff Simpson, WA	Rep. Judy Stiegler, OR	<i>Energy Efficiency Committee</i>
Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, AZ	Rep. Mark Strama, TX	Rep. Carolyn Tomei, OR
<i>Assistant Minority Whip</i>	<i>Chair, Technology, Economic</i>	Rep. Timothy J. Toomey, MA
Rep. Christine Sinicki, WI	<i>Development and Workforce</i>	Sen. Patricia Torres Ray, MN
<i>Chair, Committee on Labor</i>	<i>Committee</i>	Del. David Toscano, VA
Rep. Lawrence Sirois, ME	Rep. Richard Stuart, NH	Rep. Anna Tovar, AZ
Rep. Kelly Skidmore, FL	Rep. Peter Stuckey, ME	Rep. Chuck Townsend, NH
Rep. Mike Skindell, OH	Rep. Stephanie	Rep. Sharon Treat, ME
Assm. Nancy Skinner, CA	Stuckey Benfield, GA	Rep. Pamela Jabar Trinward, ME
Sen. Dan Skogen, MN	Rep. Mary Ann Sullivan, IN	Rep. Mike Tryon, IL
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and</i>	<i>Vice-Chair, Small Business &</i>	Rep. Clift Tsuji, HI
<i>Natural Resources Committee</i>	<i>Economic Development Committee</i>	<i>Chair, Agriculture Committee</i>
Rep. Nora Slawik, MN	Sen. Nancy Sullivan, ME	Sen. Susan Tucker, MA
Rep. Linda Slocum, MN	Rep. Vanessa Summers, IN	<i>Vice-Chair, Joint Committee on</i>
Sen. Bob Smith, NJ	Del. Scott Surovell, VA	<i>Telecommunications, Utilities and</i>
<i>Chair, Environment and Energy</i>	Rep. Patricia Sutherland, ME	<i>Energy</i>
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Benjamin Swan, MA	Rep. Frank Tupper, NH
Rep. Elaine Smith, ID	Assm. Robert Sweeney, NY	<i>Vice-Chair, Resources, Recreation</i>
Rep. Jefferson Smith, OR	<i>Chair, Assembly Committee on</i>	<i>and Development Committee</i>
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and Water</i>	<i>Environmental Conservation</i>	Rep. Art Turner, IL
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Jon Switalski, MI	<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>
Rep. Matt Smith, PA	Rep. K. Mark Takai, HI	Rep. Cleon Turner, MA
Rep. Nancy Smith, ME	Rep. Roy Takumi, HI	Del. Frank Turner, MD
Rep. Suzanne Smith, NH	Rep. Mike Talboy, MO	Sen. Nina Turner, OH

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Rep. John Tuttle, ME	Rep. Mary Beth Walz, NH	Sen. Suzanne Williams, CO
Rep. Max Tyler, CO	Sen. Dave Wanzenried, MT	<i>Majority Caucus Chair</i>
Rep. Peter S. Ujvagi, OH	Rep. John Ward, MN	Rep. Sheryl Williams Stapleton, NM
Rep. Alice Underhill, NC	Rep. Edith Warren, NC	Rep. Franke Wilmer, MT
<i>Vice-Chair, Environment and</i>	<i>Chair, Appropriations</i>	<i>House President Pro Tempore</i>
<i>Natural Resources Committee</i>	<i>Subcommittee on Natural and</i>	Sen. Frederica Wilson, FL
Rep. Dave Upthegrove, WA	<i>Economic Resources</i>	<i>Minority Lead Whip</i>
<i>Chair, Ecology and Parks</i>	Rep. Ray Warren, NC	Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy, MT
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. Rebekah Warren, MI	Rep. Ryan Winkler, MN
Del. Kris Valderrama, MD	<i>Chair, Great Lakes and the</i>	Rep. Lonny Winrich, ND
Rep. Mary Valentine, MI	<i>Environment Committee</i>	Rep. Dave Winters, IL
Rep. Linda Valentino, ME	Rep. Rae Waters, AZ	<i>Republican Spokesperson, Electric</i>
Del. Joseph Vallario, Jr., MD	Sen. Kirk Watson, TX	<i>Generation & Commerce Committee</i>
Rep. Kevin Van de Wege, WA	<i>Vice-Chair, Transportation and</i>	Rep. Brady Wiseman, MT
Rep. Kendall Van Dyk, MT	<i>Homeland Security Committee</i>	Rep. Brad Witt, OR
<i>Chair, Fish Wildlife and Parks</i>	Rep. Thomas Watson, ME	<i>Chair, Business and Labor</i>
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. David Watters, NH	<i>Subcommittee On Workforce</i>
Rep. David Van Wie, ME	Del. Vivian Watts, VA	<i>Development</i>
Rep. Martha Vanderlinde, SD	Rep. Jim Wayne, KY	Rep. Suzi Wizowaty, VT
Rep. Suzanne VanOrman, OR	Rep. Kate Webb, VT	Rep. Alice Wolf, MA
<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture, Natural</i>	Rep. Kathy Webb, AR	Sen. Lois Wolk, CA
<i>Resources and Rural Communities</i>	Rep. Carolyn Webber, NH	Rep. Larry Womble, NC
<i>Committee</i>	Rep. David Webster, ME	Rep. Jessica Wooley, HI
Del. Michael Vaughn, MD	Rep. Jennifer Weiss, NC	<i>Vice-Chair, Agriculture Committee</i>
Rep. Ben Vig, ND	Rep. Joan Welsh, ME	Rep. Michael Wray, NC
Rep. Edward Vigil, CO	Sen. Elliot Werk, ID	<i>Vice-Chair, Appropriations</i>
Rep. Mike Villarreal, TX	<i>Assistant Minority Leader</i>	<i>Subcommittee on Natural and</i>
Rep. Greg Vitali, PA	Sen. Royce West, TX	<i>Economic Resources</i>
Rep. Hubert Vo, TX	Rep. Jake Wheatley, PA	Rep. Thomas Wright, ME
Rep. Melanie Wade Goodwin, NC	Rep. Walter Wheeler, ME	Sen. Robin Wright-Jones, MO
Assm. Connie Wagner, NJ	Rep. Alma Wheeler Smith, MI	Assm. Mariko Yamada, CA
Rep. Joe Wagner, ME	Rep. Jane Whilden, NC	Rep. Karen Yarbrough, IL
Rep. Richard Wagner, ME	Sen. Mary Margaret Whipple, VA	Rep. Coleman Young II, MI
Rep. William Wainwright, NC	<i>Democratic Caucus Chair</i>	Rep. Nancy Young Wright, AZ
<i>Speaker Pro Tem</i>	Rep. Scott White, WA	Rep. Kenny Yuko, OH
Rep. Glenn Wakai, HI	Sen. Charles Wiger, MN	<i>Chair, Commerce and Labor</i>
<i>Vice-Chair, Consumer Protection &</i>	Sen. Patricia Wiggins, CA	<i>Committee</i>
<i>Commerce Committee</i>	Sen. Mary Jo Wilhelm, IA	Rep. Steven L. Zaiser, ND
Del. Jeff Waldstreicher, MD	Rep. Nate Willems, IA	Rep. John Zenie, VT
Rep. Deb Wallace, WA	Rep. Brendan Williams, WA	Rep. Jake Zimmerman, MO
Rep. Armando Walle, TX	Sen. Carol Williams, MT	Sen. Ryan Zinke, MT
Rep. Mary Jane Wallner, NH	<i>Senate Minority Leader</i>	Rep. David Zuckerman, VT
<i>Majority Leader</i>	Rep. Sandra Williams, OH	
Rep. Rochelle Walton Gray, MO	<i>Chair, Economic Development</i>	
	<i>Committee</i>	

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you. You were a Navy SEAL for 23 years, so you probably know better than most people here about protecting our country. I completely agree with your stance in this letter that climate change threatens our national security. The Defense Department certainly knows that.

It needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. So, I want to ask you, do you still feel that climate change is a significant national security threat and one that requires immediate action, or has your position changed since you have been in Congress?

Mr. ZINKE. That is a great question.

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, you are welcome. I want to be honest with you. The three tenets of climate change, one is we both agree that the climate is changing. We both agree that man has had an influence.

Senator FRANKEN. I think a major influence. If you just look at CO2 levels and how they parallel with temperature rise, last year was the hottest year on record. The year before was the hottest year on record then. This year is going to be hotter. This is happening, and sea level is rising.

Mr. ZINKE. I am not—I am not an expert in this field. What I do know—

Senator FRANKEN. But that to me is a cop out—

Mr. ZINKE. No, I want to be honest with you.

Senator FRANKEN. I am not a doctor, but I have to make healthcare decisions.

Mr. ZINKE. I, too, sit on the Natural Resources Committee and I have went through hundreds of hours of testimony on all topics, is that there is no model today that can predict tomorrow. So where we agree is we need objective science to, one, figure a model out, and, two, determine what are we going to do about it. What do we do?

When you say that we want to recognize CO2 levels, absolutely. Recognize also that the ocean is a contributor to it when a small rise in temperature in the ocean makes a big difference in CO2.

Senator FRANKEN. Well, it absorbs the CO2. It makes a big—

Mr. ZINKE. It makes a big difference.

Senator FRANKEN [continuing]. In sea level. And that means storm surges create tremendous damage and are going to create climate refugees, and are going to require, and I know I am out of time. They are going to be requiring the use of our military if we do not do something about it. I think this is a false choice. We can build an economy, sell to the Chinese, sell clean energy technology. That is what we should be doing.

I am sorry I have gone over my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. We do have a vote coming up shortly, and I would like to get to the two remaining members who have not yet had a chance to ask questions. It is my intention that we have a second round after this, but we will be able to take a quick break as well.

Let us go to Senator Portman.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Madam Chair. Commander Zinke, thank you for your willingness to step forward to serve in a very different capacity.

We have had a lot of discussions today about issues relating to the Department of the Interior and your role. One that I want to focus on is the national parks. I think it is a great opportunity for you and for our country to do more to deal with the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog we talked about to preserve and protect these great treasures.

We just went through a process in Congress of considering this. In fact, the legislation which was tied in with the Centennial last year—the National Parks Centennial Act—passed in the wee hours of the morning just about a month ago. It passed with the indispensable help of the Chair and Ranking Member here today. It is something I have worked on for nine years going back to my time as Office of Management and Budget Director where we put a Centennial Challenge together.

The challenge is essentially two parts. One, it helps with regards to the Park Service by allowing private sector funds to be raised to match Federal funding. Second, it helps the Foundation to be able to raise funds. That money, by the way, will be within your discretion, and I hope some of it will be used for just deferred maintenance, and I hope some of it will be used for some other special projects to enhance our parks.

So, my question to you today is, are you aware of this program and its potential? Let me give you an example. Thanks to Lisa Murkowski and others on the Appropriations Committee, even before it was authorized a month ago, some of this was happening. And the match expected to be one-to-one was almost two-to-one. In other words, \$1.00 of Federal funding resulted in \$2.00 of private sector funding coming into the parks. I think it could be much greater than that, and the Foundation is an example.

So, how do you feel about the program? Are you supportive of it? And, specifically, would you support funding this in our appropriations cycle?

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you for the question, and I am aware of it. I think it is a great opportunity. One is the—as the Secretary of the Interior, as it turns out, I have a number of boards with a diversity of talent, both in business and in conservation. Foundations like this offer a unique opportunity for innovation and looking at different ways of not only funding our parks, but also looking at protecting our parks. Trail building, I think, is an opportunity we need to look at, you know, how to—how to reestablish a national trail building program. A lot of that I would assume is going to come from the private sector. So I think the Foundation and other boards are a unique opportunity to leverage, and I am a strong proponent of it.

Senator PORTMAN. I am glad to hear that, and we will need your help as we get in the appropriations cycle. There are so many other priorities, and this one is crucial given the state of the parks.

I will say in Ohio we do not have a lot of Federal public lands, as you and I discussed. We do have a beautiful park, Cuyahoga National Park, which is top 10 in visitation. So when you are on your tour somewhere between Hawaii and Montana, we expect you to drop into Ohio and to see one of the great suburban parks in America where there is access to a huge population in the area. A lot of young people and a lot of schools are involved and engaged,

which is exactly what we need more of, as you said, getting the millennials involved.

With regard to rules and orders that the Department has finalized in the last 60 days prior to your confirmation, should you be confirmed, I am concerned—I have heard from constituents worried about job losses and other economic impacts. In general, what is your plan with regard to sort of 11th hour rules that have come in? And, specifically, with regard to the Stream Buffer Rule, what are your thoughts?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, I find the 11th hour rule to be problematic because what it shows to me that previous to that, there was no either collaboration or the collaborative effort was not—was not effective. Generally the last hour rules result in distrust and policy that I think is not conducive of a collaborative and trust relationship.

If confirmed, we will look at whatever is in my power, authority, and evaluate. You know, everything is on the table, as it should be, specifically different rules. But in general, when you have a last-minute rule, that means that it was a last-minute decision, and there was not working with this body to make sure we have a solution that should stand.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you. I appreciate that, and particularly on the Stream Buffer Rule in Eastern Ohio and coal country it is problematic.

Finally, Great Lakes. I will not ask you answer it because my time is expiring, but Senator Stabenow asked you a little about the invasive species part of this. Fish and Wildlife is very helpful there. They do the monitoring for us. They are the early warning signal really for the big head carp coming up and other invasive species. So we look forward to working with you on that, and I appreciate your commitment to her and to us, those of us who want to help preserve that great treasure of our Great Lakes.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Portman. For the information of members, the vote has started. We will have Senator Hirono ask her questions, then we will take a break and return at 5:00. Senator Hirono.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Madam Chair. Congressman, you are going to be awfully busy because when you came to see me you committed to coming to Hawaii. I think you also mentioned visiting the territories which include Guam, Puerto Rico, a number of other places, as well as I think the Compact Nations—Palau, Marshall Islands, and Micronesia. They would love to see you should you be confirmed. I know that.

In the discussion about energy, you have said a number of times that you support all-of-the-above, which sounds really great, except that in all-of-the-above, what happened is that the fossil fuel side of energy has gotten a lot of support over decades. So, I hope that when you say “all-of-the-above” that you will also be committed to providing more resources and support, particularly R&D, for alternative and renewables, aside from or in addition to fossil fuels. We need to have a more level playing field for policies that truly reflect support for all-of-the-above.

Mr. ZINKE. I have always been a strong proponent, you know, on the record for research and development of different technologies, different innovations, different opportunities in this complete spectrum of the energy, to include looking at traditional sources to make sure we are better at doing that, you know, certainly horizontal drilling, fracking, coal. But all-of-the-above I think is the right approach. When it comes out of the test tube and into fielding, energy needs to be affordable, reliable and abundant.

Senator HIRONO. I think, though, when you look at the 100 years in the future and you recognize that climate change is upon us, and that it is a multiplier—it is a threat multiplier. Admiral Locklear has testified to that, so I know serving in the military you are well aware a hundred years or 30 years from now, we need to do more than continue to provide the kind of sustained support that we have provided to the fossil fuel side.

Let me get to the question of infrastructure because I am all for what you are saying about the need to pay attention to the infrastructure needs of the DOI. But then it is always an issue of how we are going to pay for it, and I am glad you are not going to raid the LWCF in order to pay for some \$11 billion in infrastructure needs. But since Departments do not operate in a vacuum, would you support privatizing Social Security or privatizing, voucherizing Medicare in order to pay for DOI's infrastructure needs?

Mr. ZINKE. So, how are we going to do it? My question—and not to evade the answer, but, looking at our budget, we spend 70 percent of our budget, you know, in entitlements, 30 percent in discretionary. We are not going to be able to cut our way out of the problems we have, nor are we going to be able to tax our way out.

The only hope of America is to grow our way out, and we can. Energy is part of it. Innovation is part of it. But we are going to need an economy that grows, and we can compete. Not only we can compete, we can dominate. God has given us so much.

Senator HIRONO. So——

Mr. ZINKE. And I think we can. The way out of this problem——

Senator HIRONO. I hate to interrupt, but I am almost running out of time, and I waited a long time.

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, you have.

Senator HIRONO. So, thank you.

Mr. ZINKE. You have been very, very patient.

Senator HIRONO. It sounds to me as though you would look to grow the economy rather than cutting back on these kinds of programs that so many people, especially our seniors, rely upon.

Talented as you are, you are not going to be able to do the job all by yourself, so you will have an opportunity to weigh in on the people who will become your deputies, assistants, etcetera. What kind of qualities would you look for in those people?

Mr. ZINKE. Loyalty, teamwork, trust, competence, commitment. I think, you know, each of the divisions have different challenges. The challenges in BIA are very different than challenges in Fish and Wildlife and BLM. So you have to put the right person in the right spot.

From a SEAL perspective, we need fearless rough riders that will make the decision regardless of whether you are going to get sued or not. Our policy has been whether we are going to get sued,

whether it is the right or wrong policy. And this is where I am going to need your help.

In order to develop the right policy, we should not be in fear of being sued time after time after time again. We should develop the right policy and have people in place that are willing to make the right decision.

Senator HIRONO. So, I agree with you. With the Chair's indulgence, I would like to just ask one more question—

The CHAIRMAN. Very quickly.

Senator HIRONO [continuing]. Make a point regarding sexual harassment in the Department. Clearly this has been going on for way too long, over a decade, when it first came to light in your Park Service. And so, as in the military, sexual assault in the military is a huge scourge on the military. I would want your commitment that you will do whatever you need to do to prevent it, which includes changing the culture by the way. It is a culture within the Park Service that lends itself to sexual harassment, too, that there will be prosecution, meaning that there will be accountability for the perpetrators of this kind of behavior.

And the third is that you will do specific things to prevent retaliation because these are the very kinds of occurrences and factors that have been a scourge in the military. So I would like your commitment toward making those kinds of changes, and I certainly will be following up with you.

Mr. ZINKE. And you have my commitment. It will be zero tolerance, and I will be fearless in this.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, we will stand at ease hopefully until just about 5:00 when we will come back for a second round. Thank you.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. We are back for round two. Everyone has had a little bit of a stretch. Congressman, we appreciate the endurance here. You are probably thinking it is nothing like what you are used to, but we appreciate the fact that you have been generous with your time and our questions here. So we will allow for members to ask another round of questions.

We actually have another confirmation hearing that has just started up at 5:00 that I am going to be heading off to when this one has concluded, so we are going full time here today.

Mr. ZINKE. It may be more popular than mine.

The CHAIRMAN. No, this has been very important.

Congressman, I want to ask you about an issue that Alaskans care a great deal about, and given the makeup of our lands and the fact that so much of our lands are held in the Federal estate. Under the Alaskan National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), it specifically provides for a 'no more' clause and makes very clear that within the State of Alaska when it comes to those areas that have been withdrawn from public land, that we have done more than any state should be asked to do. It is abiding by ANILCA that is a very, very strong and firm commitment that Alaskans want to see.

You have stated very clearly on the record here, and I think the words you used was, you said you are “absolutely against transfer and sale of public lands.” Now, we have had a conversation in my office, and you have met with the full delegation and had discussion about where you are coming from on this issue and understanding the Alaska lens on this.

As you know, and as I made clear in my opening statement, there were promises made to the State of Alaska and statehood promises that are inherent in ANILCA, in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, promises made to our natives and native people, promises made to the native veterans who were serving in Vietnam who were not able to receive their native allotments. These are commitments that have been made to the state that have not yet been fulfilled, and part of my real mission here in the Senate since I came was to make sure that these promises have been kept.

Can you give some assurance to the people of Alaska that when we are talking about these issues, these promises, these commitments that have been made to our state, to our native peoples, to our Vietnam veterans, that you will work with us to fulfill those promises?

Mr. ZINKE. Absolutely. And transfer or sale of public land is different than treaty obligations. I am very familiar, thanks to your staff, about the Vietnam issue. They were serving their country and, therefore, did not have the opportunity, and that is a treaty obligation, and a commitment, and a promise. So, I will work with you, and I look forward to working with you on this particular issue.

The CHAIRMAN. You understand that the effort, if you will, to address the potential for a state forest is because of the frustration that we have had as a state in gaining access to any viable opportunity for timber harvests within our nation’s largest national forest?

Mr. ZINKE. And that has been their frustration a lot is that people are so frustrated, they just lost hope, that the Federal entity, whether it is BLM or another entity, Forest Service, is capable of managing the land, or even capable of properly managing the land to remove even the dead and dying timber. So, my job—number one job is restore trust, and we can.

Within the Department of Agriculture there are stewardship programs that allow management, and who’s better to manage it? These are collaborative efforts that we should look at about who is in the best position to manage the property. There is a difference between switching title and having the ability to manage. I think we can carefully go through that, and I will work with you on it, some is legislative, to do it.

The CHAIRMAN. When we talk about frustration and we talk about who is best to manage something, another area of extreme frustration right now is with the decision from this Administration to basically seize the authority for Fish and Wildlife Management in our parks and in our refuges, even though those authorities are very specifically and very clearly reserved to Alaska under ANILCA. So, this is something that, again, I will ask you—

I am assuming that you think that states are better positioned to manage fish and game decisions, and that it is not the Federal Government. I understand that you may have not worked that much on subsistence issues. But given the importance of this issue to Alaska, I need to have your commitment to a formal review with the Park Service and with Fish and Wildlife on their regs and really work with the State of Alaska to get us to a better place when it comes to an approach to the fish and game management decisions within the state.

Mr. ZINKE. I look very much forward to reviewing—formal review of the process, as well I look forward to reviewing, you know, our management. Again, from a perspective of my life in management, centralized direction, decentralized execution. That means giving people local people, local communities, a say-so so there is not this divide that has occurred.

As you know, we have talked about different parts of Alaska, especially in the lower part, where the opportunity to harvest timber in a reasonable, sustainable, traditional method has been taken off the table. That is hurting real communities. In some areas in Washington, the catastrophic fires. Why do we have fires at the extent and magnitude that we do each year?

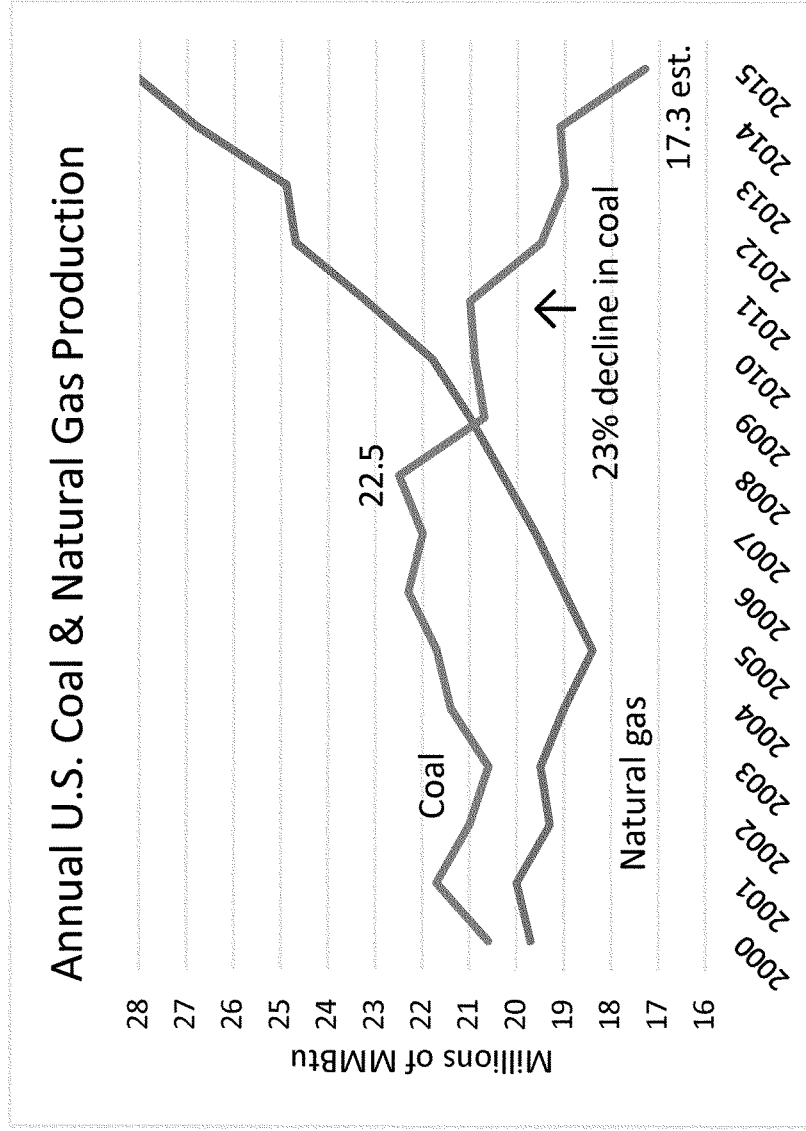
Senator Franken talked about global warming. The statistics I have from a single summer of forest fires in Rosebud County is which very few people know where Rosebud County is other than Senator Daines, made more particulate during that season than running 3,000 years of coal strip. So let us manage our forests. Let us manage our fires. Let us manage our lands the way it was intended to. That means having the voice of Alaska and the voice of the people that live there.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, and if I may, when we say how it was intended to, ANILCA lays out very, very clearly, again, their reservation to the State of Alaska with regards to the Fish and Wildlife Management authority, so I look forward to discussing this more with you.

Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Madam Chair. And if I could in the second round go back to some of the things that have been brought up and some of your testimony, and then to clarify more on some issues of great importance to the State of Washington. If we could on this chart, somebody mentioned there has been a war on coal.

[The information referred to follows:]



In reality, I think this chart will show you there has been a 23 percent—the first one there—23 percent decline in coal and an increase in natural gas. According to the Energy Information Agency, between 2000 and 2008, coal was significantly less expensive and supplied about 50 percent of our generation. But since the beginning of 2009, that gap between coal and natural gas prices has narrowed and a large amount of gas produced from the shale formations—I do not know if you want to blame fracking, but guess what? It has led to a lot more natural gas, a lot more lower natural gas pricing, and a lot more consumption of natural gas than coal.

I do not know if you want to say that natural gas is having a war on coal. I am not going there. I am simply saying that this is the fact, that this has been driven by the market. According to the Energy Information Agency as well, this is a market function.

Okay. The reason why this is an important question is, as we have discussed this issue about getting a fair deal for taxpayers, the GAO and the Interior Inspector General have both found that BLM recently undervalued Federal coal at a cost to the taxpayers of something like \$60 million over 10 years. So, I want to make sure that when I asked you earlier, you said you were committed to reviewing this issue. I think one of our colleagues tried to get you to say you are ready to end the moratorium.

What I want to know is are you going to make sure that taxpayers and fairness to taxpayers that the GAO Inspector has laid out are going to get your attention and the attention of this Administration?

Mr. ZINKE. Absolutely. You know, I think using the objective statistics is important in making sure that our taxpayers get value, and I am very sensitive to that. I am also sensitive the great State of Washington on the whole issue.

Senator CANTWELL. Right. Let me ask you about this because you also said, and I believe you, I think anybody who has represented Indian Country—well, I cannot say everybody, but most people who have represented Indian Country have had to deal with the issue of tribal sovereignty and have come down one way or another in understanding that. You seem to have articulated a very strong view of tribal sovereignty and tribal rights, particularly for treaty tribes that those treaties have outlined our obligations as a nation to nation status. Is that right?

Mr. ZINKE. That is correct.

Senator CANTWELL. So you believe that the Lummi Nation has a right to object to a coal terminal in Washington State based on their fishing rights and abrogation of their fishing rights?

Mr. ZINKE. And I have obviously familiarity with this. Up front, when I was a representative in Montana, as I still currently do, I have always taken the position that I am strong on Indian issues. I am stronger and more familiar with Montana Indian issues. As a Secretary of the Interior, now I have to be strong on all issues.

And on the Gateway—Pacific Gateway Terminal, what I raise my eyebrows on is I did not take a position whether yes or no on the terminal. I took a position to make sure the NEPA process was followed and the EIS was completed before making a judgment. What I found was we were close to ending the NEPA process with the

EIS and after years and millions of dollars were spent on it, and then that was truncated and stopped by affidavits.

I did not judge whether the affidavits from the tribe were true or not true. It is just if you do not finish the NEPA process and do not finish EIS, and then all of a sudden that process can be interrupted and a permit can be pulled on the basis of something outside the EIS, why would you ever consent to spend millions of dollars on EIS? That was my objection, and I do not mean to speak for Senator Daines.

Senator CANTWELL. So you believe in the tribal sovereignty of the Lummi Tribe to object in this case?

Mr. ZINKE. They certainly had every right to object as well as in this case the Crows, who also have a treaty obligation. I also found that you were picking one tribe or another, and believe me, I am from a state where there are great tribes—great warrior tribes. Tribes are not monolithic even in Montana. There are traditions. There are cultures. But one should not be in the business of picking one treaty over another, at least arbitrarily.

This is where working together—

Senator CANTWELL. Yeah, that is not—definitely not where we are going here. We are more about whether we are going to uphold their rights in the region and their ability to object on various developments that affect their ability to fish and maintain their—

Mr. ZINKE. And do we agree, absolutely.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that. I do have another question about the Yakima Basin. I will pass to my colleagues, and we will come back.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Daines.

Senator DAINES. Thank you, Madam Chair. I had one more question I want to get to but ran out of time in the first round, and it was related to Indian Country and economic prosperity.

Congressman Zinke, you have been a great partner working together on behalf of Indian Country. Well, there is fighting to enact the Blackfeet water settlement, and I think it is important for all of us to realize that that was approved by the Montana legislature seven years ago. With your leadership in the House and the work we did here in the Senate, we came together and got that passed in December. That is a monumental effort. It was a great win for the Blackfeet Tribe, and it is an example I think of the partnership that we have had going forward here to help Indian Country.

You have been a champion in fighting on behalf of the Crow Tribes, as you mentioned here in the last exchange, their sovereign right to develop their coal resources. And as you said in your testimony, the unemployment rate in Crow Country will go north of 90 percent if they lose those jobs. You have been fighting for Federal recognition for the Little Shell Tribe. The bottom line is Indian Country should be very excited to have you in their corner as the next Secretary of the Interior.

My question is, tell us what you have done to help bring economic prosperity to Indian Country.

Mr. ZINKE. A great question. You know, not enough. As you know, Montana is an awful big state. The first thing I have done is visited, and been around, and looked at the tribes. Again, they are not monolithic. The challenge in the Fort Peck Tribe, a lot of

drugs from the—from the Bakken. And to a degree, the Fort Peck Tribe is very maternalistic. They rely on the mothers and grandmothers, kind of the fabric of the tribe. Drugs have gone inside and they have created havoc where maybe one generation or two generations has been at risk of that, and that has caused enormous upheavals in the culture of the tribe.

As well opportunity—economic opportunity. Not everyone lives in an area where you can develop casinos. A lot of the Montana tribes are isolated, so they rely on—they are resource centric on their—there are a couple of exceptions.

But, first, I think is to understand and respect, is go the tribes and empower. Figure out what a specific tribe needs. One of the hurdles—this is a challenge, and this is why BIA is so important to get really good people in BIA that are willing to sacrifice and stay late and come to work early. It has been attempted multiple times before without a lot of success I would say.

You know, talking to the great nations, you have got to listen and develop a plan with the tribes because, again, not every tribe is the same. Tribal healthcare is an issue. Tribal education is an issue. Prosperity, self-determination, and this is an issue that we should all care very deeply about on it because it is important.

From a military point of view, I am adopted an Assiniboine. Michael Bell was a SEAL. I put him through training at Assiniboine. He went home on break and was stabbed in the back and killed on the reservation; a needless, pointless, painful death of a warrior. In a lot of tribes, being in the military has standing. Every time you go in and do either a pow-wow or a ceremony, military members always come in first.

Here lies an opportunity for the military to help these tribes become leaders, and go back to the different tribes, and form the basis for lifting themselves and having self-determination. So, I think there is an opportunity for military.

I think there is an opportunity in DOI in looking at our trail systems of—my wife was sent on a landing team, and real quickly, the trails team and the VA looked at opportunities for homeless and veterans to do cemetery repair. They have a whole program to do it. A lot of it is to be in the right uniform, show up on time. I think that program can be looked at in the DOI of our trails. We are way behind in maintenance of our trails.

A lot of the Indian cultures have a strong tie to our trail systems, to our land, and it is a metric. The trail system starts in one point, ends in another part. This is a great opportunity for Indian nations to participate in a program that will get them out and work. But we have to work together with the tribes, and they—and they have to have buy in.

Senator DAINES. I think, and I will wrap it up with a comment. The perspective you will bring to this job when you are confirmed as a Montanan living in the shadows of Glacier National Park—actually you were born near Yellowstone National Park and grew up near Glacier National Park. But I think what you also bring is your military background.

When we talk about Indian Country, Native Americans have the highest percentage veteran population of any ethnic group in our country. Having your military service will bring, I think, an added

dynamic to help out Indian Country. With the BIA where we have these men and women—you mentioned the story of Mr. Bell, but these men and women who come home from serving overseas with security clearances, and then it takes us a year and a half to get their clearances. They want to get involved in law enforcement back on the reservation, and the BIA takes 12, 18 months to clear them when they already had a security clearance fighting for their country overseas, when we have all the drug problems and crime problems on the reservation that they could help by having more law enforcement. We have an open headcount there.

You can do a lot to help Indian Country, and I am grateful they are going to have a champion there with their new Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. ZINKE. And I look forward to it.

Senator DAINES. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Daines.

Senator Heinrich.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, and I want to start by giving you an opportunity to correct the record on something my colleague, Senator Franken, said. I believe while I was gone, and I do not want to misquote him, that he said that Smokey the Bear was not real. [Laughter.]

I want to read to you from Wikipedia: “The living symbol of Smokey the Bear was an American Black Bear, three-month-old cub, who, in the spring of 1950 was caught in Capitan Gap fire in the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico.” Do you dispute that? [Laughter.]

Mr. ZINKE. I do not, and my grandchildren behind me, and I also believe in Santa Claus.

Senator HEINRICH. I just want to establish that. I want to go back to this tribal sovereignty theme and bring up an issue that the Department of the Interior, I think, actually deserves great credit for over the last few years.

One of the most important duties for any Secretary is to uphold our nation’s trust responsibility, and tribes have been facing a tragic loss of their cultural patrimony through a growing international market for tribal religious objects. These objects are not art. They were not created to be sold. They are sacred objects that are central to tribes’ cultural and spiritual practices, and they were illegally stolen from the communities to which they belong.

Acoma Pueblo in my home state has fought to repatriate a sacred shield from an auction house in Paris. I give great credit to the Department for doing the right thing, for being a stalwart ally and working with the State Department and Department of Justice to obtain a warrant for the shield’s return. That is an ongoing investigation, but I just want to ask you if you will commit to continuing to work with the Department of Justice, the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, to ensure that this remains a priority for all three of these departments?

Mr. ZINKE. It remains—repatriation is an important issue, and I first became familiar with it when the Blackfeet had some of their ancestors actually in the Smithsonian. And the process of repatriation, because the tribe itself had different orders—they had the Beaver order and they had different sects within the tribe. The

repatriation process is enormously complicated and one that I do not pretend to understand, but I do understand that it is complicated, and even the tribe itself had to go, a number of rituals.

Repatriation and making sure that artifacts that are important to their cultural identity, we need to pursue, and we need to facilitate the return on it, you know. If someone bought—rather than being stolen, if someone bought it, that is something we have got to work through, a legal framework, because if someone buys something legally with every good intent, that is different than someone who has pillaged and profited. I think the pillage and profiting side is absolutely without question an area that we need to pursue.

Senator HEINRICH. I look forward to working with you on that. You made the statement about water in the West, and Federal water projects that the Bureau of Reclamation constructs and administrators are really critical for states all up and down the Rocky Mountains.

In New Mexico, the Navajo-Gallup water supply and the Ute pipeline projects will bring much needed water and infrastructure to parts of our state that truly deserve and need it. Communities like Portales and Clovis have seen wells run dry and groundwater reserves dwindle to only a 20-year supply. In addition, many Navajo families have literally never had running water.

How are you going to ensure that the Bureau of Reclamation brings these kinds of critical infrastructure projects to completion, cost-effective completion?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, first, clean water I think is a right. It is not a privilege. So, we will start there. Our water challenges, particularly in the West, are immense. But we are a great nation. Let us prioritize what we need to do.

Part of it, and I have always looked at infrastructure as not an expense, but it is an investment. Having an investment now will prevent a lot of heartburn, heartache and unintended consequences in the future, particularly when it comes to water. And expanding recreation, Americans want to go outside, and we need to give them the opportunity to do it.

I keep on going back to the jobs bill. It is very difficult, as you know, on the House side it is probably more difficult than the Senate side in some areas. Spending money in the House side is extraordinarily difficult on things. But we are going to have to—we are going to have to meet in the middle on making sure we have priorities set and making sure those water issues are enough of a priority, especially when it comes to isolated areas.

There are places in Montana—you know, Poplar—that really do not have access to water or any other way than to pipe it from long distances. And population in the Navajo Tribe, not a lot there. They are not going to be able to do it on their own, so you need a system in there to do it. It is expensive, recognizing it is expensive, and recognizing also that you do not need to over engineer everything so it is so cost prohibitive.

There is new technology, new piping technology. Let us look at innovative ways that are more cost-effective. And we need to put a little pressure on perhaps the Army Corps of Engineers to faster adapt standards on some of these things, especially piping when it comes to water so we can get it there at a better price.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich. Senator Barrasso. Senator BARRASSO. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Last Wednesday, in the final days of the Obama Administration, the BLM released a report detailing their review of the Federal Coal Program. The report laid out a road map for administrative action. The problem is this. The environmental impact statement on the Federal Coal Program has not yet even been completed. So, the Obama Administration once again shows its hands demonstrating that they believe the facts should not get in the way of their pre-determined outcome. So just as a comment from me, I am very hopeful that Department of the Interior under your direction, once confirmed, will operate differently under you and the new Administration.

A lot of this hearing today concerned things that we are able to repeal, roll back, otherwise eliminate. But as Secretary of the Interior, you are going to have the opportunity—an incredible opportunity—to create a real culture of change in an agency that I believe desperately needs it. And while the Department of the Interior houses the BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife, and others, the Forest Service is part of the Department of Agriculture. We talked, and Senator Wyden brought up the issue earlier today about forestry, fire borrowing. Senator Cantwell and I held a hearing in Seattle about the issues of wildfire and the concerns.

Given that so many of the forested lands are outside of the Department of Interior's control, what would you do as Secretary of Interior to improve forest health on lands in your jurisdiction, and how can we coordinate efforts with the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Chief?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, up front, I think we need to look at the Forest Service and our land management policies, and have the discussion about what is the best method of managing our lands. As you go out West, the checkerboard system, when it was put in, you know, and there was a reason why Ag has Forest Service at the time. I think we need to re-evaluate it and look at what is the best method to make sure we have the efficiency, making sure our fire policy is consistent between BLM land and Forest Service land, making sure access is consistent between Forest Service and BLM.

In Montana we have a lot of the Canadian border, and it turns out the Forest Service does not even give a key to their Homeland Security guys to do a security run along a road on the border. So even between the agencies there is a cultural roadblock to working with each other, even when it comes to borrowing a set of keys to go on a road.

I think everything should be on the table. And, again, I talked about a road map for the next 100 years. Let us be bold. Let us not come in with agendas. Let us come in with where we want to be 100 years from now on our public lands. There are certain things we are going to agree on. I think there is going to be a lot more we are going to agree on than disagree. But on those things we can agree, let us look at a roadmap going forward and have the discussion.

Senator BARRASSO. You may be familiar with President Obama's 2015 presidential memorandum on mitigation. The memorandum

called for new mitigation policies from the Department of Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service. Last May, a Wyoming rancher came, sat here and testified before this committee on one of those policies, the one focused on compensatory mitigation, and basically it amounted to extortion. So are you going to commit to revisiting the Department's various mitigation policies to ensure that future requirements are more practical?

Mr. ZINKE. I am going to be very, very busy, if confirmed, and I will work with every state because you matter. Wyoming matters, and every state matters. If there are policies that are perceived as punitive that are not working in your state, my obligation is to work with you because you matter. Wyoming matters. Alaska matters. Washington matters. West Virginia matters, and New Mexico matters. Not only members of this committee, but Congress matters.

In my opening statement I meant what I said about the arch for the benefit and enjoyment of people. I also absolutely meant when I said it was erected by Congress, by an act of Congress. That is an important point that we need to go back to, about making sure you represent your great state and your constituency and that should be respected in our policies.

Senator BARRASSO. In terms of being very busy and what matters, I would tell you as a former Chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, the three of us have been former chairmen of the Indian Affairs Committee. I think the Bureau of Indian Affairs is going to require significant attention from the next Secretary of the Interior. I think I would get an agreement here. We have all seen how a culture of dysfunction within the BIA has real disastrous human implications, so I appreciate your efforts there as well.

Madam Chairman, I see my time has expired. So, Senator Heinrich and I will come together and compose written questions regarding Smokey the Bear, Yogi Bear, and the teddy bear. So, we will submit those. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Barrasso.

Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Congressman, for being here and putting yourself on the line. I appreciate it very much. I also want to commend you for having a bipartisan introduction. That does not happen that often.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, thank you.

Senator MANCHIN. I did not know if you wanted to comment on that one or not.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, you know, I am glad because hopefully I have bipartisan support.

Senator MANCHIN. Yes.

Mr. ZINKE. But I think that is what we need for this job because the job is not Republican or Democrat. It is America.

Senator MANCHIN. Right.

Mr. ZINKE. This job is steward—

Senator MANCHIN. Well, let me say also. You came and visited me, and we had a great visit and a great talk about things we both hold near and dear to us. You also promised that you would come to the State of West Virginia.

Mr. ZINKE. Yes.

Senator MANCHIN. But I also noticed everyone else asked for the same, so I need to know in what order. [Laughter.]

Mr. ZINKE. Well, my first order is the great State of Utah. There are some real—the SEALS call it the five-meter targets. Up close we have a problem out in North Dakota because that could go bad in a number of different ways. We have a problem in obviously the great State of Utah. And Alaska is always important to me.

Senator MANCHIN. I still do not know where I am in the pecking order—

[Laughter.]

Mr. ZINKE. West Virginia is an easy drive. [Laughter.]

Senator MANCHIN. I know you are coming. I know that. Let me talk about the Stream Protection Rule because I think that a lot of times, especially coming from the State of West Virginia, an extraction like Montana, a lot of people think we do not care about the Clean Water Act or the Clean Air Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and many other laws that have been fundamental in improving all of our lives. I want everyone to know that there is no way that we are rolling back any of those.

But there are some of these that are just so far reaching and make no sense whatsoever. I cannot even get some people to tell me what the definition of a “stream” is. If you could give me a little bit, just quickly as stream protection, what is your position on using the Review Act CRA to rescind this regulation?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, thank you for the question. It is important to me. Oddly enough, as I was reviewing the transcript from Secretary Jewell as I came in before this committee, one of the questions was can you define a stream. So that is a question.

The Stream Protection Rule, in my mind, is about water. All of us should agree that we want clean water, and all of us should also recognize that geology is different. As a geologist, the geology in Appalachia, is much, much different, and a policy about stream protection, when it is looked at specifically in the Appalachians, I think quite frankly we can do better.

This is where one size does not fit all. We need to make sure that if we are going to mine, drill, harvest, that we want to do it right. Protection of water is—has to be a priority with that. So there are ways absolutely to make sure absolutely that we do it right and protect our water.

Senator MANCHIN. Good.

Mr. ZINKE. And I am willing to work with you.

Senator MANCHIN. But a stream should have water in it, right?

Mr. ZINKE. A stream should have water and interconnectivity.

Senator MANCHIN. It all helps.

Mr. ZINKE. Yes, subsurface, surface, connectivity, movement of water. Again, you can isolate different areas. When they talk about runoff, what is runoff if it is captured in a holding pond? What is runoff during a storm drain? These are issues. You can take it too far in every case where it becomes punitive and you are not going to get anything done.

Senator MANCHIN. You can imagine in our state with the terrain that we have, topography that we have, how difficult it is to do anything. You cannot even build a house. If they want to shut you

down, they can shut you down, everything. It is just absolutely so onerous, it is just ridiculous. And I am glad that you——

Mr. ZINKE. And I have climbed on Seneca Rocks and been to——

Senator MANCHIN. You have been right where I have been. You have got a lot of common sense there and all that. I have got one more point which is the abandoned mine AML money, Abandoned Mine Reclamation. That is under SMCRA, and that is one of the biggest things you have.

Since 1977, there has been \$10.5 billion in fees from coal production, okay? Ten-and-a-half billion dollars. Eight billion of that has been distributed as grants to states and tribes to land and water reclamation projects administered by the OSM and the UMW retiree plans. There is still a large amount of high priority sites that remain in the OSM's inventory that must be reclaimed.

I wanted to ask your opinion on AML, the way it has been distributed, and should that money be for the purpose it was designed to be used for, all coal related, or should it be able to be used by states for other things that basically are not coal related, since all the money comes from coal?

Mr. ZINKE. This is the same argument with the Land and Water Conservation Fund that we both support.

Senator MANCHIN. Sure.

Mr. ZINKE. I think it the revenue source is narrowed and used outside of that, I think there is a legitimate argument about that. In Montana, from a Montana congressman perspective, we have hundreds of mines that were mined during the turn of the 18th or 19th century that our reclamation list of going through and cleaning up the sites is long. So, that fund has been used to clean up sites in Nevada, and I am sure New Mexico, and most of it. So, there is absolutely a requirement to clean it up.

The discussion should be, I think, how do we appropriate the funds correctly so one industry does not bear the burden as in the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Offshore bears almost the entire burden of revenue, yet the funds do not go along the coast. Should hard rock mining, you know, also contribute to that?

Senator MANCHIN. They do not pay anything.

Mr. ZINKE. This is where we need to have the discussion, and this is where I have to—I should work with you because this is a change in the law. The law should be fair. It should be appropriate. But we also have to recognize that reclamation of these sites is incredibly important because these sites oftentimes—and we have hundreds of sites in Montana. I do not do not know what the inventory is nationwide, but I am sure in every state there is probably something that we need to attend to.

Senator MANCHIN. Well, let me just say I want to thank you for your testimony and being so frank and direct with this. And fairness within the system. That is all I have ever said, treat us all the same, fairness to it, because some mining pays nothing, but they do receive, and that is not right. It is all because of politics here. All because of politics, and that could be changed.

Mr. ZINKE. I will be glad to work with you on it, because I think it needs to be fair. Our laws need to be transparent and fair.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you so much, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Manchin. Chairman's prerogative says that we can do one more quick go-around.

I have just two more questions, and I hope they will be brief. When we deal with some of the projects that have so much potential, for instance whether it is the potential to be able to utilize the natural gas that we have in Alaska's North Slope, we are going to have to figure out the way that we move that gas to tidewater, move it to the market. That will require a process. You have got to get a host of timely-issued Federal environmental permits. The longer the delay for the permits, the more expensive the project is.

I would like your commitment to be working with us, not only for projects like the Alaska LNG Project, but also recognizing that when it comes to our domestic mineral production, we are sitting dead last in the amount of time it takes to get yes or no answers to get these permits for our domestic minerals production. We talk a lot about the vulnerability that we have as a nation looking to other nations for oil and relying on oil. Well we are headed that same direction when it comes to minerals because we need the minerals that will make things like this, or the vehicles, or the wind turbines that we are relying on for renewable energy. But this permitting process that we are dealing with can oftentimes just end up being this dead zone where the costs pile on, the projects get delayed and folks give up.

I would like your focus, your muscle behind ensuring that we have a fair process that it is an expeditious process and one that really works efficiently, because so much of the frustration, so much of this lack of trust that you have been talking about I think stems from much of what people see that they term bureaucratic delay and unnecessary red tape.

Mr. ZINKE. Well, I agree, and when the process becomes arbitrary, and we talked about taxpayer value. When you are bidding on a piece of property to either mine or drill, and that value is significantly reduced because of uncertainty, the taxpayer does not get its full value on it. So, on a permit process, it has to be fair. It cannot be arbitrary, but there has to—I am not going to say certainty, but certainly when you are bidding on a project, the value of that bid is on the basis that you can execute it. When there is no certainty of execution, then as a taxpayer, we do not get the right price for it.

So, our permitting process is broken. It is somewhat arbitrary, and I do think we need to focus on it. But it needs to be fair, and it needs to be a process where NEPA considerations do need to be taken, because we all want the same thing. Hopefully we do. We all want clean air, clean water and to make sure that we understand consequences.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I look forward to working with you on that.

Last question. The current Secretary of the Interior knew that she could not come into this committee room without me asking a question about the status of her effort to assist the close to some 1,000 people that live in the little Aleut community of King Cove and how we are going to make sure that they, too, have access to what most Americans would consider just an essential part of living and that is access to a lifesaving road that could get them out in the event of a medical emergency.

The fine people of King Cove have been fighting this fight for over three decades. They have been let down repeatedly by their Federal Government. They do not trust their Federal Government because repeatedly they have been told that there is higher value to the animals and the birds than there is to their human life. That is pretty hard.

I am going to ask you, recognizing the Federal trust obligation that you have as you begin this new role, recognizing that you have clear compassion for our native peoples, I am asking you to do everything that you possibly can to work with us to reopen, review this decision that has led to a rejection of this lifesaving road.

Mr. ZINKE. You have my absolute commitment that I will restore trust and work with you on this issue because it is important.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. ZINKE. I did not know where King Cove was before I was nominated for the job. I know where it is now.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to take you out there when we open a road, and you will know it firsthand.

Mr. ZINKE. I cannot wait to meet the great people of—the 1,000 people of King Cove.

The CHAIRMAN. They are beautiful.

Mr. ZINKE. I know where it is on the map now. I do not know the ground, but I look forward to being there.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple of last issues. Again, thanks to your family for sustaining what probably is going to be a four-hour hearing. But these are important land issues for our nation, and we thank you for your willingness to serve.

The Bureau of Reclamation is already funding critical work on what is called the Yakima Basin Project. It is funding fish passage, and reclamation and water conservation projects. I want to get your commitment to continue the work of and recommendations of the Bureau on the Yakima Basin Project on its innovation and conservation, and would like the same understanding that you gave to my colleague that these water issues are not earmarks. They are moving forward on serious drought issues for our nation.

Mr. ZINKE. Thank you, and I think you have a wonderful staff because I have begun to be familiar with the issue, and I look forward to working with you on it because this is important. Montana is not that far away on it. Issues of water, the Snake River drainage begins in Montana all the way across the Columbia. I get it, and I am looking forward to working with you and making sure it is done.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. I appreciate that. You mentioned the efforts of your agencies, USGS specifically, on the science side. One of the key interests of the Pacific Northwest unfortunately after an incredible, very unfortunate disaster in Oso where 43 people were killed, is the notion of LIDAR, being able to use light detection ranging, as a key way of looking at landslide possibilities. Will you continue to push LIDAR funding as part of your next budget request for USGS?

Mr. ZINKE. I will. I have to review it because there are some emerging technologies, particularly in the UABs, that actually may

be better suited. But I am committed to making sure we have the right data.

Senator CANTWELL. Okay.

Mr. ZINKE. The specific method on how we get there, I think there is a discussion. As technology goes forward, there is some promising technology on survey.

Senator CANTWELL. I like the fact that you are committed to on-going technology to help us on these issues. I think technology is emerging that is going to give us a much clearer picture about both drought and its impacts and warming conditions on fire and our water resource issues, and I think it can help us greatly. I am glad you are willing to use that.

The Spokane Reservation Equitable Compensation Act is also something that has involved the Department of the Interior. It has literally passed both the House and Senate. It has been supported by the last agency and previous Secretaries. Will you take a look at this and look at ways to support the Spokane tribe on their settlement for the construction of dams that caused flooding in the region, taking away their opportunities?

Mr. ZINKE. I look forward to looking at it. I, too, used to shop at the Bon Marche in Spokane, so I am familiar with the area, but I am not familiar with this specific thing. But I look forward to looking at it with you.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Heinrich, a final question?

Senator HEINRICH. Congressman, I know you are a passionate sportsman. It is one of the things I like about you. I think I mentioned in our meeting that I spent four days with my two sons over the holidays on one of the Department of the Interior's BLM wilderness study areas. I am proud to say on that trip my 13-year-old took his first elk, and I think both boys will never forget that trip.

But I suspect, if Montana is like New Mexico, you have also experienced losing legal access to public land, experienced what it is like to drive up on a maintained road that you always knew was there and find for the first time a locked gate.

I have a bill called the Hunt Act to help address this kind of issue. I am not going to ask you about my bill, but I will ask you to commit to working with me on those kinds of access issues that have really moved to the forefront of concerns by sportsmen up and down the Rocky Mountain West.

Mr. ZINKE. I would absolutely. In my opening remarks, I specifically mentioned access for a reason. I am concerned, and I am concerned that not only our generation but our next generation will continuously see closed roads, fences and lack of access so traditional hunting and fishing almost are positioned as an elite sport.

Senator HEINRICH. I think I have seen a television show filmed in your state where Randy Newberg, in order to access BLM land, literally had to rent a helicopter to get dropped in because over the years, access to the private lands around it had been cut off. I think it is something we need to just understand the scale of so that we can come up with strategies either through, you know, for example, using LWCF for easements as opposed to outright land

purchases, or other strategies to make sure that we do not have public land that the public cannot use.

Mr. ZINKE. I agree with you. I think Americans should not be locked out of their national treasures. We are seeing that more and more, that access is becoming more difficult and restrained, and I share your concern with it.

Senator HEINRICH. Thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. One final question. Congressman, your jurisdiction is over an awful lot of timber, timber land, and national parks, wildlife, refuge, fish and wildlife. Our newly sworn in, newly inaugurated Governor, Jim Justice, yesterday was giving a speech. Very interesting. West Virginia is one of the most covered forested states in the nation, and we have an awful lot of environmentalists who are upset with the CO₂, and we are trying to do everything we can with technology. However, we use our energy.

What they fail to recognize is that we have an awful lot of timber that is not going to be harvested, and by not having select timber harvesting, you cut this tree down and you make this right here. The carbon is inside here. It is stored. It is not going anywhere. If you let that tree fall and let it decay and rot like some people want, the CO₂ is all emitted, every bit of it. I know it is a big thing. Oh, we cannot cut here, and we cannot go in here. We are emitting so much CO₂ into the air. They are very much concerned if we burn one lump of coal, by god, shut it down, but do not let the timber just rot and go to waste without ever trying to use it for productive and also environmental consequences. I do not know how we are managing. Do we have select timber harvesting and things of that sort in the government properties that you are over?

Mr. ZINKE. Well, currently I would say that management policy has been fire, and I am not—

Senator MANCHIN. That is great.

Mr. ZINKE [continuing]. An advocate for management by catastrophic fire. That is the group that believes that we should naturally manage by natural regulation. I am an advocate for healthy, resilient forests.

Senator MANCHIN. Do you think if we got the really, really good environmentalists, concerned environmentalists, together and they could see scientifically what is happening, that they might be able to work with you, or are you willing to try to go down that path?

Mr. ZINKE. I think for most of Americans, we want good policy.

Senator MANCHIN. Yes.

Mr. ZINKE. There are extremes on both sides that simply will not negotiate. There is an extreme on both the right and left that simply are driven, and they are not negotiable in their views. I think anyone who serves the country, serves a constituency, and within, you know, the public there are broad views, but you look at what the best policy is.

My wife, and I, and family spent some time in Germany. They have different management policies. Canada has different management policies for their forests. We have great people that go through the forestry programs, but they are frustrated, too. I have talked to the forest ranger. They feel like they do not have the

tools, and they do not have the authority to manage the forests when they are healthy, and they are, too, concerned about even removing dead and dying timber.

Senator MANCHIN. I know.

Mr. ZINKE. When Forest Service is 71 acres behind in just removing dead and dying timber, something has gone wrong.

Senator MANCHIN. Here is the thing. In his speech yesterday, he made it so crystal clear, and he held up a piece of wood, and he said—you know, the podium he was speaking at. He says, a lot of CO₂, but it is right here. He says, everything you all make us waste, and let fall, and let nature take its course emits into the air. He said, so someone is going to have to make a decision pretty soon.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Manchin, thank you.

Representative Zinke, thank you. Thank you for being here today. Thank you for your willingness to serve. We thank you, and we thank your family because public service, you the face, but we know that the families stand behind you, allow you to be that public servant. So, to all of the family, thank you, Mrs. Zinke and to the family. To these granddaughters in the back, you get gold stars for absolute best behavior, yes.

[Applause.]

We thank you for supporting your grandpa in such a good way. We appreciate that.

I do thank the members of the committee. We had great participation this afternoon. The questions were truly broad ranging, but I think you can tell, Congressman, this is a committee that likes to get into the real meat of the issues, the policies. We try to do good work. We try to do work here on a very cooperative, collaborative, bipartisan basis.

Should you be confirmed, as I believe you will be, we look forward to continuing a dialogue that is really very open and one that is designed to be collaborative and bipartisan. We would welcome that.

I would like to remind my colleagues we have agreed that members may submit additional questions for the record. We will hold it open for another couple hours, so let us just say by 8:30 this evening, all QFRs would be in.

I would also ask unanimous consent to submit several letters of support for Representative Zinke for the record of this hearing that we have received. We did ask that members submit any of their own to our Chief Clerk, Darla Ripchensky.

With that, again, we thank you, and the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 6:05 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
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Questions for the Record from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: From 1944 to 1982, the Interior Department conducted oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, leaving behind 136 well sites in need of environmental remediation and proper plugging and abandonment. While I secured \$50 million in 2013 to clean up many of these legacy wells, by 2019, when that funding is exhausted, the Department estimates there will still be 29 wells in need of remediation. If you are confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to working with me to develop a plan to expedite the cleanup of all remaining wells, rather than allowing piecemeal, bare minimum federal efforts to continue year after year?

Response: Madam Chairman, I believe that cleaning up those legacy wells should be a priority, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.

Question 2: Fisheries and tourism are vital to the livelihoods of thousands of Southeast Alaskans, but the Canadian government is permitting new hardrock mines that could threaten transboundary watersheds if they do not adhere to strong environmental standards. While the State Department is generally the lead on this issue, one of Interior's agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has provided grant funding to study water quality on the Stikine, Taku, and Unuk Rivers. This will help establish a baseline and protect our ability to seek damages in the event of an environmental mishap under terms of a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. Are you willing to engage on this issue, consider increasing transboundary water studies, and consult with other Departments to encourage Canada to take all necessary steps to protect the environment in this region?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 3: Will you review recently completed and ongoing Resource Management Plans in Alaska to ensure that these plans are consistent and do not prevent access to resources needed for economic development?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 4: Will you staff the Alaska Special Assistant to the Secretary positions, both in Anchorage and Washington, DC?

Response: As I have discussed with you and your staff, Alaska deserves special attention given the large Federal footprint and impact on the state. With this in mind, if I am confirmed, I will work with you to fill the Special Assistant position based in Anchorage, and learn more as to why the position in Washington was eliminated.

Question 5: Will you ensure that all Interior agency actions affecting Alaska are consistent with recent principles set forth in Supreme Court decision in the *Sturgeon* case, requiring that agency organic acts' interpretations and all agency actions be consistent

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with the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act?

Response: I have been informed that the Supreme Court in the *Sturgeon* case, recognized that when passing the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Congress appreciated that Alaska is different in many respects from the lower 48 states in law. To the extent that the Congress has recognized such differences in the law, I will work to ensure that those differences are properly recognized in agency decisions.

Question 6: Will you review BLM's recent decision to require new cadastral survey standards for lands being transferred to the State of Alaska and Native corporations, which are opposed by the State, and which could affect the dependability of land title?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 7: One of the greatest challenges facing Alaska is that our economic backbone, the Trans-Alaska-Pipeline System, is running three-quarters empty. It now carries just about 500,000 barrels per day—not due to a lack of resources, but instead an almost blanket lack of permission to access our federal areas. If you are confirmed as Interior Secretary, will you make it a priority to work with me, as well as Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, and Governor Walker, to develop a plan to refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline?

Response: President-elect Trump has declared energy dominance to be a strategic economic and foreign policy goal of the United States and that he intends to unleash America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves. Accomplishing that goal will, in part, depend on increasing flow on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that happens.

Question 8: A critical element of statehood is the primary authority to regulate resident fish and wildlife and establish the means, methods, seasons, and bag limits for the taking of such resident fish and wildlife. This state authority also extends to federal lands unless and until expressly and specifically countermanded by Congress using its Property Clause authority. Congress later provided that federal land designations and administration were not to diminish this State authority. Do you concur that states, possess primary authority to regulate hunting and fishing on federal lands?

Response: Madam Chairman, I agree that, in general, states have primary responsibility for wildlife management and that authority generally extends to federal lands. Moreover, I am committed to collaborating with state wildlife managers to ensure that we jointly conserve our wildlife resources.

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Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

Question 1: If confirmed, do you intend to serve the entire four-year term as Secretary?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Have you severed all ties with the Special Operations For America super PAC you formed in 2012?

Response: Yes.

There was a complaint filed against the Special Operations For America super PAC with the Federal Election Commission in 2014 that alleged improper contributions to your congressional campaign. What action did the FEC take on that complaint?

Response: Because I no longer have any role at Special Operations For America and am not a party to the complaint, I do not know all the actions the FEC has taken on that matter, but I do understand it remains under review.

Have you severed ties with SEAL PAC? If not, what involvement will you have with it if you are confirmed as Secretary? What steps will you take to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of any conflicts of interest resulting from your association with SEAL PAC?

Response: SEAL PAC is my leadership PAC, and I will step down from my position with the PAC upon confirmation if confirmed.

If confirmed, I will abide by the recusal policy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which requires that I:

- (1) Abide by the recusal requirements imposed by federal conflict of interest laws and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch;
- (2) Seek the advice of my designated agency ethics officer before proceeding whenever faced with a situation that may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest, and;
- (3) Adhere to the principles of ethical conduct and avoid any actions creating the appearance of violating the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch

Question 3: Thinning at-risk ponderosa pine forests and re-introducing prescribed fires (when the conditions are acceptable) is an idea supported almost universally by the scientific community, the environmental groups, and the timber industry. Will you be helpful in getting the pine pilot we developed here last Congress—a program to expedite those thinnings—enacted?

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I know the House prevented any wildfire or forestry legislation from being enacted at the end of last Congress—I suppose thinking they'd have a better chance this Congress to enact some of the sweeping ideas and environmental waivers that have been floating around. But don't you think a program focused on collaborative projects in the most at-risk forests—which are supported by science—are a better approach to protecting our communities, strengthening our timber industry, and restoring our forests?

If confirmed, will you be supportive of fixing the fire-borrowing problem that plagues the Federal wildland-firefighting agencies? And working within the Administration and with your current House colleagues on putting in place a plan that takes this issue off the table once and for all?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with you, Members of the House of Representatives and my colleagues within the Administration to get a handle on the fire-borrowing problem.

Question 4: The Department of the Interior has put into place a robust scientific integrity policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department's Bureaus and Offices, including the Secretary, are using the highest quality science, subject to rigorous scientific and scholarly standards, to inform decision making. This policy is also in place to ensure that the production and use of science at the Department is insulated from political intervention.

What are your views on scientific integrity and how will you ensure that the highest standards of scientific integrity are maintained at the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Department of the Interior depends on the best available science for agency decision-making. I will review agency policies and guidance to ensure that scientific integrity underpins agency action.

Question 5: The U.S. Geological Survey is the Nation's primary earth science agency and is responsible for producing the science to ensure that our nation is prepared for hazards like floods and earthquakes, produces our nation's maps, assesses our nation's energy and mineral resources, conducts science necessary to understand and manage our nations lands and waters, and produced critical satellite imagery which is all over the world and by our own military and civilian agencies. Each of the Department's bureaus also produce science needed to carry out their missions.

What do you believe is the role of science in informing decision-making and how will you ensure that the USGS and science at the Department is properly resourced to provide for the safety and prosperity of our country?

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Response: The U.S. Department of Interior will rely on objective science and rigorous scientific review to inform agency decisions. I look forward to reviewing agency resources at the U.S. Geological Survey and other divisions if confirmed.

Questions for the Record from Senator John Barrasso

Question 1: In December 2016, the National Park Service issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan. The Moose-Wilson Corridor is a 7.1-mile stretch of road at the southern end of the Grand Teton National Park. Public access to the corridor is highly valued by locals, state residents, and national and international visitors alike for the unique opportunity it provides to view wildlife and enjoy the natural setting and beauty of the Grand Teton National Park.

The 2016 ROD represents a dramatic shift in the management approach for the Corridor from the 2007 Final Transportation Plan by severely limiting the public's access to this national park, forcing a 30-plus mile rerouting; eliminating a multi-use pathway from the southern entrance despite 2 tragic deaths from vehicle-cyclist collisions in this park; and reversing course on the 2007 decision to reroute the northern segment of the Road out of important wildlife habitat and wetlands. The Park Service has decided to limit access to the Corridor to no more than 200 vehicles—a threshold that lacks any rational scientific or factual basis, and will require new construction of 3-lane queuing station on both ends of the Corridor essentially cutting off public access to the Park. The second Environmental Impact Statement spent millions of taxpayer dollars for 7.1 miles of road planning – intended to keep the public out. The park even says it may be 2-4 years of through-road closures to pave 1.7 miles of the road and a spur entrance – which raises serious questions of intent to habituate the public to keep out of their national park.

Given the contrived and arbitrary nature of this decision and the dramatic shift from the Final Transportation Plan, will you consider reopening the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan?

Response: Senator, I am not sufficiently informed of the details of the situation to make a judgment today. However, access to our public lands is one of my highest priorities, and, from your description, it appears this may be an example of a situation that needs attention. I commit that, if confirmed, I will review this situation and consult with you further.

Question 2: In Wyoming, and other states across the West, agencies have identified limited land parcels that would be more suitable for management or ownership by the state, county, or other entity. Administratively, these lands could be made available for sale, transfer, or other means of disposal, but change in the status of these lands is limited by agency use of employee time and funding priorities. Given your support for H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015, will you commit to

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prioritizing funds for disposal of lands that have been identified, agreed upon, and approved by the respective agencies?

Response: I remain committed to managing our federal land in a way that best serves those who use it. Wyoming and Montana are very similar. Both our states understand the challenges and opportunities associated with Federal Land. I supported H.R. 1214's unanimous passage because it is common sense. While I oppose the large-scale sale or transfer of public land, small parcel exchanges or conveyances that benefit the local community have received my full support as a Congressman and will continue should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: When working on difficult forestry issues, which I've been doing for over 20 years, you learn that no one gets everything they want but everyone must get something they need. My O&C bill brings people together, it gets the harvest up, and it protects bedrock environmental laws. I understand the urge to streamline process, but forestry policies that stack the deck in favor of one side won't work, particularly if you're interested in rebuilding faith in the federal government, which you noted in your remarks and in our meeting.

Litigation reform bars the path to the courthouse and sufficiency language essentially hands forests over to just one side of the debate. Coupled together, you create a scenario where the actions of one side are deemed automatically compliant and the other side has no way of challenging the action. That's the definition of stacking the deck and it will drive the two sides of an issue further apart, rather than bringing them together in a collaborative way.

How would you encourage collaboration in forestry while balancing the needs of all interests and avoiding reforms, like sufficiency language, that hand the entire deck over to one side?

Response: I appreciate your concerns about the need for collaboration in balancing the needs of all interests while avoiding policies that stack the deck for one side of any issue. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee in the House, I supported legislation that would have expanded the collaborative model to help resolve natural resource conflicts on our public lands. I would like to work with you and the other members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to provide appropriate authority to the Department of the Interior to expand and protect the work of the Resource Advisory Committees under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans that have been collaboratively developed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

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Question 2: Representative Zinke, in our meeting, I told you about my bill, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, to cut the bureaucratic red tape that stands in the way of getting more people outdoors and opening access to America's special places. Recreation is an economic driver, particularly in rural areas, with studies showing recreation is a \$646 billion economy.

As Secretary, will you commit to working with me on my bill and prioritizing outdoor recreation and its vast economic potential on public lands, without sacrificing critical environmental protections?

Response: Senator, I appreciate the time you took to meet with me prior to the hearing. As we discussed, I believe public lands should be available for the enjoyment of all, and, if confirmed, outdoor recreation will be a priority of mine, and I believe recreation can occur while respecting and caring for the environment.

Question 3: Throughout the process of developing the Klamath water management agreements in Southern Oregon, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, was a critical player in helping with stakeholder negotiations. Those agreements have expired and the future of the Klamath Basin remains uncertain. Are you familiar at all with what is happening in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Senator, I am somewhat familiar with the issues in the Klamath, but, if confirmed will need to learn a great deal more. I hope I will have the opportunity to visit the area with you and learn from you what needs to be done.

Question 4: Can you commit to working with me and the other members of the Oregon delegation and to supporting the Bureau of Reclamation and their efforts to help solve this complex problem in the Klamath Basin?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 5: I've introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act for the last several congresses, and I know you cosponsored the House companion bill in the past. While the issue of wildfire funding has been primarily a Forest Service issue, wildfires don't pay any attention to jurisdictional borders and they don't care who manages the land they're burning, so as Secretary of Interior, this is an issue you'll have to address. Do you think the practice of fire borrowing should be ended?

Response: Thank you for your leadership on the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The entire Montana delegation has cosponsored this bill because Western states like ours intimately know the devastation of forest fires. I understand the importance of fixing the current wildfire borrowing system, but I believe it is only one component of the problem. As Montana's Congressman, I have been an active proponent of forest management reforms so wildfires are less severe. Active management reforms will get to the root of

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the problem and lessen the burden of fighting wildfires. I fully agree that our firefighting funding mechanisms must be reformed, but it must be part of a comprehensive solution. I look forward to crafting those measures with you if I am confirmed.

Question 6: Do you think controlling the 10-year average cost of fires by freezing it at a certain level, or using some other budget control tool so it doesn't continue to erode the agency budgets, help the agencies better budget for and fund fires in the future as well as fund other non-fire programs in forest management and recreation?

Response: As you know, we are both supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. I do believe these budget reforms would provide relief to the agencies to better invest in other priorities. However, if we do not tackle comprehensive management reforms, forest health will continue to deteriorate and escalate the potential for severe forest fires. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on comprehensive solutions that fix our budget process and management shortfalls.

Question 7: I'm sure you're aware of the situation that unfolded at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon this time last year and the disruptions it caused in the local communities. I was grateful that federal officials coordinated closely with the County Sheriff and Commissioners to ensure that community members were safe and that the rule of law was preserved. Incidents like this, led by extremists, that compromise our public lands are very concerning and I'm just glad it ended without escalating further.

If you are confirmed as the Secretary of Interior, you will be in charge of managing National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Areas, and recreation lands, in an era where hostility toward federal lands and federal officials is rampant, particularly in rural areas.

What will you do to ensure the protection of not only our incredible public lands that have been set aside by Republican and Democratic Presidents and Congresses, but also the protection of your employees, like the employees at the Malheur Refuge, who are not just federal employees, but Oregonians?

Response: Senator, as someone who has led soldiers in combat, I am committed to the safety of the Department's employees. I am also committed to restoring trust by freeing up our employees to make decisions and to collaborate with local law enforcement if things get difficult.

Question 8: Oregon is no stranger to an ESA listing, so ranchers and conservationists took a front seat in the collaborative efforts to establish land management plans to prevent one. After all the collaborative success, the last thing that the people of my state want to see is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage grouse. Fortunately, that was avoided in September 2015, when the Fish and Wildlife Service decided that listing the bird was unwarranted. However, FWS's decision was

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predicated on the strength of federal sage grouse conservation plans, without which, the bird would likely have been listed.

As secretary, can you outline what steps you will take to support the robust implementation of both federal and state grouse conservation plans, so that we can prevent an ESA listing and continue to support and encourage collaboration?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. I am aware that there are several grant programs within the Department of the Interior to provide federal funding towards species recovery efforts. If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 9: Are you committed to meeting the goals of the Endangered Species Act and would you agree that federal funding to help recover threatened and endangered species is crucial to preserving our nation's wildlife and biodiversity?

Response: I support the goals of the Endangered Species Act. I agree that focusing efforts on the recovery of listed species is important and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Question 10: Can you help me understand your stance on public land ownership and tell me whether you think that public lands should remain in federal ownership or be sold or transferred to states or other jurisdictions?

Response: I believe that Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he put under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands. I share President-elect Trump's view that federal lands should not be sold to states and I have voted 17 times against such action.

Question 11: Oregonians and all West Coast residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the next major earthquake, which has become a matter of "when" and not "if." Preparation is key, and even just a few seconds of warning is enough to take steps to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction. In a few seconds, supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals can be turned off, trains and cars can be slowed or stopped, sensitive data can be secured, and people can get to safe places. This is a bipartisan priority and we need to get this system finished -- failing to prepare for these events is not an option, and could have dire consequences for West Coast populations. Given the importance of this technology to provide the kind of warning that exists for hurricane, winter storms, and other extreme events, how would you, if confirmed, work with USGS to ensure ShakeAlert becomes fully operational for the west coast?

Response: As a geologist, I am fully aware of the hazards along the western coast of the United States, and appreciate that the risks are a matter of "when" and not "if". Earthquakes are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission

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Area. I fully support the collaborative research and scientific efforts related to earth hazards and, if confirmed, will continue these efforts.

Question 12: Can you assure us that the annual budgets you would propose would back up your stated commitment to those resources with the actual conservation and maintenance dollars they clearly need?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 13: The California water provisions that passed as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act gives the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce discretion in implementing the mandates to maximize water deliveries to Central Valley farmers. How do you plan to balance the mandates to maximize water deliveries to farmers with the mandates to protect fishery resources and comply with the Endangered Species Act when making critical decisions about how to interpret and implement the provisions in this legislation?

Response: Water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians from the Bay area to San Diego and provides water supplies to over two million acres of farmland. In addition, it serves as an important stop on the Pacific flyway and is home or a gateway to the home for numerous endangered fish species. In addition to other provisions, the WIIN Act calls for the Secretaries of the Interior and of Commerce to use science and the adaptive management provisions of the existing biological opinions to maximize water supply and water supply reliability, consistent with the Endangered Species Act. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Commerce and the State of California to fulfill the directives in the WIIN Act, consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Question 14: The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) provides funding in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and now California) to carry out fish passage projects and screen irrigation channels to reduce fish mortality. This program was recently reauthorized, but authorized funding was drastically reduced. Would you support funding for the implementation of this critical program that benefits farmers and fish?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 15: The Secretary currently oversees eight regional DOI Climate Science Centers, including an active center at Oregon State University. Would you support the continued climate change research and education at these eight centers?

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Response: I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most effective when they operate according to “clear and precise” goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.

Question 16: In general, what do you see as your role and the role of the Department of Interior in combating climate change?

Response: Senator, that is a challenging question simply because it is so broad. Many programs at the Department relate to or impact the climate. In general, my role, if confirmed, and the Department’s role will be to ensure that we manage programs and makes decisions based upon best available information and sound science.

Question 17: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 18: The American Geophysical Union has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 19: Representative Zinke, I noticed that, in 2010, you signed a letter to the President and the Congress calling for “comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” I applaud your leadership, and I have submitted that letter for the record. Do you still agree, as you apparently did in 2010, with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is happening and that we as humans are contributing to it?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 20: Do you still believe, as you did in your letter to the President in 2010, that “the clean energy and climate challenge is America’s new space race”? And that our country should not back down from a challenge on this scale?

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Response: Senator, I believe that the impacts of climate change are uncertain and that we have not yet determined the best way or ways to address it.

Question 21: Representative Zinke, do you think the American taxpayer should get a fair, market-value, return on the coal, oil and natural gas extracted from publicly-owned lands?

Response: Yes.

Question 22: The GAO found, for example, that in order to get a fair return on oil and gas from public lands, the BLM should update its more than 30-year old rules on the venting and flaring of gas. I assume you would agree that it is time to dust off these rules and make sure they're delivering appropriately for the American people? Correct?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have not been briefed on the details of the regulations covering the venting and flaring of gas, I will review them if I am confirmed and make a determination on whether those rules need to be updated.

Question 23: Using GAO's estimates about the amount of federally owned natural gas that is wasted due to venting and flaring, over \$63.5 million in royalties was lost, over \$31.1 million to individual states in 2013 alone. This is millions of dollars that could go to state infrastructure needs, schools, and emergency services. Do you believe that states should be receiving this money instead of allowing companies to waste American energy resources and not give the American public their due? If so, how do you plan to make sure that states are getting the money they should from wasted natural gas, especially since you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee your support for the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 24: A federal court in Wyoming refused to enjoin the BLM's new wasted gas rule on January 16th. The court found that the rule was "unambiguously" within the BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development for the prevention of waste, has economic and environmental benefits, will not impinge on states' sovereign interests, and will not cause significant economic burden to states or oil and gas companies. Do you believe the BLM has the authority to regulate oil and gas production on federal lands so as to prevent waste?

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Response: While I have not been briefed on the legal issues surrounding the litigation over the BLM rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate those legal issues and determine whether additional regulation of these activities is appropriate.

Question 25: I applaud your comments in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that “we’re wasting a lot, we’re venting a lot, and we’re wasting energy, and that is troubling me...The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. Let us build a system that recaptures what is being wasted.” Given that only 9% of venting or flaring requests cite a lack of infrastructure as the reason, according to the GAO, and the vast majority of wasted gas can be traced to leaks, what would you do to fix this problem?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 26: If you support the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval, as you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, how do you plan to use existing DOI authority to address what you say is troubling to you regarding the amount of wasted gas coming from production on federal lands?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 27: Based on hundreds of thousands of public comments, on January 11, 2017, the Department of Interior has clearly identified there is a need to modernize the federal coal program. We have a responsibility to ensure the public gets a fair market-value return from the sale of America's coal, and that we operate the program efficiently, while minimizing the impact of coal production on our communities and environment. The only responsible next step is to continue the review and implement the commonsense measures identified in the Department’s recent roadmap. I want your commitment to continue the work of modernizing the federal coal program, through the completion of an above-board transparent, scientific and public process.

What assurances can you give me that you will continue this important work?

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Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Question 28: What will you do to limit liabilities to the American people associated with the cleanup of mining on public lands, including bonding and other protections?

Response: As someone from Montana, I appreciate the need for reclamation and want to ensure that we hold companies appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

Question 29: You have said that you are supportive of an “all of the above energy policy, which includes renewables.” I suspect we agree renewable that energy projects can be important drivers of economic development in rural communities, often supplementing the income of farmers and ranchers and raising needed tax revenue for small towns. Yet we must balance the need for clean energy with the need to protect wilderness and fragile habitat. What will you do to ensure the Department of Interior continues to support the responsible construction of renewable energy projects on public lands?

Response: I will support responsible construction of projects. However, I have not been fully briefed on the regulatory regime in place for permitting renewable projects on federal lands, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 30: What are your plans for the siting and leasing processes for offshore renewable energy development, such as wind and marine hydrokinetic? How do you plan to involve other maritime industries, such as fishing and shipping, to ensure that the development of offshore renewable energy is collaborative?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the permit applications for these projects, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. A critical component of the NEPA process is consultation with all affected stakeholders. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 31: You recently made some misinformed comments about the competitiveness of wind and solar energy in relation to coal-fired electricity. Wind energy is one of the most affordable options for new electric generation, and wind energy is reliably providing over 30% of the electricity in Iowa, and over 20% in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma; and generating more than 10% of the electricity in eight additional states. In fact, 79% of electricity power generation jobs in Oregon are in wind

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and solar, according to the Energy Information Administration. Given the importance of renewable energy in so many states, will you state for the record your support for good, American jobs in renewable energy production that are not only affordable but also provide an over 13% share of US energy production?

Response: I strongly support good, American jobs in renewable energy production.

Question 32: I know you have been supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline. Although Keystone is an international project, other pipeline projects--like the Dakota access pipeline--could fall onto your plate. Could you give us some insight into how you would deal with such a sensitive tribal issue, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline?

Response: Senator, the current situation with regard to the Dakota Access Pipeline is very challenging and unfortunate. This country needs to build and operate infrastructure, and the permitting process for infrastructure needs to comply with all laws and regulations and be relatively predictable so that companies and individuals undertaking infrastructure projects can reasonably estimate costs and schedules.

We must also be sensitive to tribal issues. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. I believe that, if we build and then maintain mutual trust, we can build relative consensus around infrastructure siting issues.

Question 33: Reuters has reported that the incoming administration aims to privatize oil-rich and coal-rich Indian reservations. Can you comment on your understanding of such conversations, and what is your opinion on whether we should privatize tribal lands for the purpose of extracting energy resources?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the referenced Reuters' report. I am unaware of any effort by anyone to privatize tribal lands.

Question 34: As Secretary of Interior, you are in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the trust relationship with all U.S. Tribes. What are your thoughts on tribal sovereignty and the role of the federal government in the tribal trust relationship?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important. I believe it should be meaningful. As a member of Congress, I have been a strong advocate for the Tribes in Montana.

Question 35: When Secretary Sally Jewell spoke of DOI's scientific integrity policies, she stated that the Department must be a leader in the federal efforts for robust scientific integrity policies because "science is the very foundation of our mission." Would you agree that science is the foundation of the DOI's mission and what would be your plan to ensure that the Department's integrity policies remain robust and reliable?

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Response: I have not studied the referenced policy. However, I would agree that DOI's mission has always included a strong science component within its bureaus. I will want to be informed by objective science as I make policy decisions, and I look forward to hearing from the Department's scientists in that regard.

Question 36: How will you work with your counterparts at the Defense and State Departments to support approval and implementation of the 2010 Agreement between the U.S and Palau to update and extend the strategic "Compact" relationship between our two nations?

Response: This is an important issue. As I have said, the relationship between the United States and the territories and freely associated states is important to me. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you to address it in a way that benefits the people of Palau, and the U.S. Government.

Question 37: Will you, if confirmed, work with the ENR Committee and with the Departments of Justice, Treasury and Labor to fully investigate any allegations that money laundering and abuse of guest workers is occurring in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?

Response: Allegations of the criminal abuse of workers anywhere are significant and serious. If I am confirmed, I will look into this matter, work with the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and act accordingly.

Question 38: Prior to 2008, even though the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was under US sovereignty, it had authority to control its borders and immigration. However, the CNMI proved unable to properly control the border or to prevent the abuse of guest workers who were admitted to the CNMI under local immigration control. Consequently, Congress extended federal border and immigration control to the CNMI. Can you assure the Committee that you will oppose any proposal to weaken federal border and immigration control in the CNMI?

Response: Control of US borders is important whether in CNMI or anywhere. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you and other federal agencies to develop an appropriate response.

Question 39: There have been press articles regarding the activities of "Best Sunshine" corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Would you please review these articles and let me know what action, if any, should be taken by the Interior Department and other Departments.

Response: If I am confirmed, I will make it a priority to review this material and respond accordingly.

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Question 40: One responsibility of the Interior Department is to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Americans in the insular areas of our nation: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands. There have been improvements over time. But in terms of income, infrastructure, and many other measures these insular areas still lag far behind the rest of America. Often they are not given the same level of funding or access to federal programs as other parts of our country. Federal agencies often don't compile data on the territories the way they do for the rest of the U.S. What specific plans do you have to increase the pace of development in the insular areas to bring them up to the economic level of the rest of America?

Response: Economic development is the best way to increase opportunity and the standard of living for all peoples. The U.S. territories face significant challenges and deserve special attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways we can work to correct these issues.

Question 41: Currently, an Interior Assistant Secretary heads the Office of Insular Affairs. That is a serious acknowledgement of the importance of the work of this office; and I think the office should continue to be led by an Assistant Secretary. Do you plan to maintain this position of Assistant Secretary?

Response: U.S. territories deserve recognition and representation within the Department. If I am confirmed, I will look into the ASIA position, but I am not aware of any effort to change the status of the position.

Question 42: In a bipartisan appropriation for the current fiscal year, FY17, the Senate voted to increase funding for the Office of Insular Affairs by \$6.9 million dollars. Will you be supportive of providing increased bipartisan support and funding to America's insular areas to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life?

Response: Providing resources is one important way the U.S. can support the challenges of the territories. If I am confirmed, I will work with you and the Congress on the proper appropriations levels for this and other areas of the budget.

Question 43: As a follow-up to my question on the Office of Insular Affairs, is more funding needed? And if so, how exactly do you think additional funds should be targeted to be most effective?

Response: If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the budget needs and allocations and will work with your office as appropriate.

Question 44: A role of the Office of Insular Affairs is to make sure that all federal agencies take the islands into account when formulating and implementing policy. What plans do you have to make sure that the Interior Department's input is welcome—and

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listened to—by other agencies, when they put together and administer policies that affect the territories?

Response: This is an important issue to me. Often the parts of the federal family neglect the territories completely or forget to take into account their unique circumstances. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about the ways we can solve this problem.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bernard Sanders

Tribal Issues

Question 1: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.”

If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to ensure sufficient access to you and recognition of the importance of Indian Affairs within the department? Will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: While the Department of Interior plays a primary role in upholding our Government’s obligations to Indian tribes, there are many other federal agencies that also work to meet the responsibility. Department of Health and Human Services plays a major role in providing health and mental health care. Department of Justice works to ensure the public safety. Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies administer programs designed to help improve Indian reservation economic development.

To succeed in its tribal relationships and trust, Interior must work with these agencies and ensure that they work collaboratively with Indian tribes. President Obama formed the White House Council on Native American Affairs to help inter-agency coordination.

How will you ensure that inter-agency coordination remains a top priority in this new administration?

Response: Senator, I agree with you that the federal agencies with obligations to and responsibilities for Indian tribes need to coordinate effectively. I am not familiar with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, but, if confirmed, inter-agency

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coordination will be a priority of mine, and, if the Council continues, I will utilize it to advance the interests of Indian tribes.

Question 3: The failed federal policies of Removal, Allotment and Termination resulted in the forced taking of hundreds of millions of acres of Native American homelands. The Interior Secretary is authorized to restore tribal homelands through the Indian Reorganization Act and the administrative Part 151 Indian land to trust process. The U.S. Supreme Court attacked that process in 2009.

What are you prepared to do to ensure that the administrative land to trust process continues to move forward under your administration?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the Tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and determine how they are best addressed.

Hydropower

Question 4: The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources debated several bills regarding energy and natural resource policy that culminated in the Energy Policy Modernization Act. One of the energy sources addressed in this legislation was hydropower, which accounts for roughly 7 percent of all energy produced in the United States today. While the legislation this committee reported, and the Senate sent to the House, protected the ability of states to manage water and the ability of the federal resource managers to rely on science and expertise, the House passed legislation effectively stripping them of the tools available to them.

Hydropower is a critical source of carbon-free energy, but it is not without negative externalities. Several states, including Vermont, support hydropower, but opposed these efforts to hobble oversight.

Question 5: As Secretary of the Interior, would you counsel the President to reject legislation that would eliminate the ability of states and federal resource managers to protect drinking water, outdoor recreation, fisheries, and vulnerable wildlife populations?

Response: If confirmed, I will seek to inform the President of my views on specific legislative proposals related to water, outdoor recreation, fisheries and wildlife as they arise.

Question 6: Would you resist efforts by industry to federalize all aspects of the hydropower licensing process and consolidate in the industry-captured FERC responsibilities for evaluating environmental impact?

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Response: If confirmed, I will work to gain a greater appreciation of the specific role Interior's agencies play in the hydropower licensing process.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been an important source for state and local outdoor recreation facilities, state parks improvements, and public park land acquisition. Vermont has benefitted extensively from LWCF funding.

Question 7: You have been a long-term supporter of the LWCF. If confirmed, do you plan to continue your strong advocacy for this important source of funding for states and local governments to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities?

Response: You and I both share a deep appreciation for the LWCF. This program has been incredibly successful in Montana. I have seen the benefits of the program first-hand with critical projects in my hometown. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to protect and bolster this important program.

Question 8: As the Secretary of the Interior, will you recommend to the President that the LWCF be fully funded?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work.

Question 9: Federal funding programs like the LWCF often involve a lot of "red tape" which can make them inaccessible to small rural communities with limited staff and resources. Would you be willing to re-examine any of the rules and regulations related to applying for and using federal funds such as the LWCF monies?

Response: Since coming to Congress, I have been one of the most vocal proponents of LWCF. It is a great program that serves Montana and our nation incredibly well. However, that does not mean it is perfect. We both represent rural states and I share your concern regarding "red tape" and limited resources. I have consistently voiced my opposition to the excessive bureaucracy that inhibits funds from making their way to those who need them most. The process should be streamlined and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve this goal.

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Conservation and Public Lands

Question 10: During your time in Congress, you earned a 3 percent rating (out of 100 percent) from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). The votes used to rate Senators and members of Congress are scored on protection of the environment, public lands, waters and air.

Your LCV score reflects that, with just one exception, you voted against federal conservation policies. You have voted for cutting back Antiquity Act authorities, against public review of hard rock mining on public lands, against a review process for grazing permits on drought-damaged public lands, and against removing harmful riders undermining protections for imperiled species including removing Endangered Species Act-protections for the gray wolf. All of these issues will be under your authority as Secretary of Interior.

Can you explain your anti-conservation voting record while in Congress? How does this record suggest that you will protect our lands, waters and wildlife against corporate short-term interests, like Teddy Roosevelt?

Response: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) voting score does not accurately represent my commitment to clean air and water, conservation and protecting public lands. I am a firm believer in the multiple use doctrine that President Roosevelt championed. However, under the current administration, the Executive Branch has often governed by rules and regulations that should have been debated and passed by Congress. I fundamentally believe in the separate but equal roles of government and the rule of law. Many of the votes calculated by the LCV had to do with rules that I believed were outside the purview of the Executive Branch. If I am confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have my commitment to follow and enforce the laws passed by you and your colleagues in Congress rather than governing by Executive Order.

Question 11: You signed the Montana Constitutional Governance Pledge promising to “legally and administratively oppose the multitude of bureaucracies that have sprung up to enforce the unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources including, but not limited to: the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Park Service, the various bureaus of Wildlife and Fisheries, etc., and restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership.”

Could you provide examples of the “unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources” by the agencies of the Department of Interior and what measures you would support as Secretary of interior to “restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership?”

Response: States across the West are uniquely familiar with the ‘checkerboard’ of private, state, and federal lands. The mix of lands under different management poses

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numerous issues, ranging from protecting recreational access to respecting the rights of private land owners. If confirmed, I want to ensure our public lands remain in public hands, and private and state-owned lands are respected as well. This means making sure small tract land transfers and sales adhere to the proper procedures.

Question 12: You are on record as supporting retention of federal lands in public ownership yet you voted for H. R. 3650, the “State National Forest Management Act of 2015” which would transfer over two million acres of Forest Service land to the states for sale to private interests. Could you explain the apparent inconsistency?

Response: I would like to respectfully correct the record. I was actually the only Republican on the House Committee on Natural Resources to vote against H.R.3650 when it came up for a markup on June 15, 2016. After the bill passed committee without my support, I reiterated my promise to my constituents that I would not support any legislation that transfers or sells large portions of our public lands. I remain committed to that promise should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Question 13: What improvements can be made to the management of federal public lands?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to improve the management of our federal lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation and responsible energy development. I intend to restore trust by working with states and local communities to inform agency decisions. I intend to promote greater public access, responsible development and ensure that professionals within the Department of the Interior receive the resources, training, and tools needed to make informed decisions that give voice to the American public. I also recognize and will preserve those lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed with man as an observer.

Scientific integrity

Question 14: Are you familiar with the scientific integrity policy at the Department of the Interior? What is the importance of the policy in your opinion?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

Question 15: Should Department of the Interior scientists be allowed to express their personal opinions about any issue as private citizens as long as they provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not for the agency?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

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Question 16: Should Department of the Interior scientists have the right of last review to ensure the accuracy of materials that rely on their scientific work or expertise—including scientific reports, executive summaries, congressional testimony, press releases, and websites?

Response: I will review federal guidelines and Departmental policies on this issue and rely on the best available science for agency decision-making, if confirmed.

Question 17: Are there any parts of the Department of the Interior websites that you believe contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous information? Specifically, do you believe that any web pages currently contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous descriptions of climate change science?

Response: I have not reviewed the full extent of the Interior Department website, but if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and paying special attention to the questions you raise.

Question 18: The most robust federal government scientific integrity policies empower scientists to speak openly with the public and the press about scientific matters. Would you improve your agency's policy to make this explicit?

Response: Senator, I respect scientists and the need for scientific integrity. I have not yet reviewed the Department's scientific integrity policies, but I will do so, and I am certainly willing to discuss this with you further if I am confirmed.

Management of Government Employees

The Department of the Interior employees 70,000 people at nine technical bureaus and a number of other offices. The following questions ask about how you would manage these personnel.

Question 19: Do you support and promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 20: As Secretary, do you believe that Congress using the Holman Rule, which allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program, to be an appropriate measure when used against your Department? Will you support Congress in passing an amendment under the Holman Rule or would you oppose?

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Response: The U.S. House of Representatives sets its rules. If confirmed, as Secretary, it will be my responsibility to express my views to the President on any specific legislative proposal, and I will do so.

Question 21: As Secretary, do you believe that you will be better able to recruit and retain top talent if Congress is able to individually target employees based on their political whims?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to restore trust and give the employees on the front lines – our rangers, field managers and managers – the space and support to make the decisions they need to make. If I do that, I believe we will continue to retain and recruit top level talent.

Question 22: As Secretary, do you support Congress targeting and altering the salaries of individuals within your Department?

Response: I recognize that Congress has the power of the purse pursuant to the Constitution.

Question 23: As Secretary, how do you view the division of responsibility and authority between Congress and your Department on personnel issues?

Response: The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent. Beyond that, I believe the authority of specific personnel decisions rests with the Department of the Interior and its bureaus.

Questions for the Record from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question 1: I serve as Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee -- which has a good deal of oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. When we met, we discussed your position on the Forest Service in broad terms. Please answer, preferably with a simple yes or no, whether you would advocate for Congress to approve legislation to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Response: Senator, when we met, I said that I think we should consider moving the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior. As we discussed, the structure we use to manage federal lands has not been given a comprehensive review since its inception, and I believe there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. Among those issues, I believe the current situation in which one federal agency manages the surface and a second manages subsurface issues creates unnecessary duplication and conflict.

I clearly got the impression in our meeting and from these questions that you have concerns about moving the Forest Service to the Department of Interior. If confirmed, I

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look forward to further discussions with you. My goal is to ensure that our public lands are managed consistent with the inscription in the Roosevelt Arch at Yosemite, “for the enjoyment and benefit of the people.”

Question 2: If you would recommend transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department, why with all of the challenges facing the Forest Service – including ballooning costs for wildfire suppression, nationwide invasive species outbreaks, and record numbers of recreationists and sportsmen looking for well-maintained trails and facilities on their public lands – would you want to undertake a complex, multi-year bureaucratic reorganization that will cost millions of dollars and precious staff time?

Response: Senator, I agree there are real challenges facing our public lands agencies, and I want to work to solve those problems rather than make them worse. If confirmed, I will work with you to that end.

Question 3: As you know, the responsibility for suppressing wildfires is shared between the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service. In recent years, as suppression costs have ballooned, critical resources have been siphoned away from programs to safeguard and enhance our public lands and are instead being used to fight wildfires. The Forest Service is now spending over half their budget fighting wildfires, which is up from 16% in 1996. If Congress does not act, the Forest Service will be spending 2/3 of their overall budget on wildfire in 2025.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both chambers to address this problem and you were a cosponsor of the latest House bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As Interior Secretary, will you continue to support the measure and work with Congress to see it enacted?

Response: If confirmed, fighting forest fires will be a major effort of mine. We need to better manage our forests to reduce the risk and consequences of fire, better coordinate firefighting and firefighting policies among federal agencies, and we should develop a better method of funding firefighting efforts. I realize these are complex issues and that you have spent considerable effort working to address them. If confirmed, I want to work with you on these issues.

Question 4: In addition to the maintenance backlogs that exist on federal lands, which I am also concerned with, I am distressed about insufficient funding for staff on Park Service lands. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan has experienced more than a 7% reduction in base level park staff and more than a 12% reduction in its base budget between 2010 and 2015. If confirmed, will you support additional cuts in funding for park rangers and other on-the-ground personnel that are struggling to meet their mission with increasing numbers of visitors; or, is this an area in the budget that you think should be increased?

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Response: Senator, I want front-line Interior employees to love their jobs and be committed to their mission. That will require attractive benefits, ensuring that staffing levels are commensurate with the need, and that those employees have the resources they need to do their jobs well. You can be assured that I will be an advocate for on-the-ground personnel.

Question 5: U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide hundreds of millions of dollars around the country for on-farm conservation projects that improve water management. The Bureau of Reclamation, through its WaterSMART water efficiency grant program, provides around \$30 million annually for water conservation projects proposed by its beneficiaries and other water suppliers. In June, USDA and Reclamation agreed to coordinate these programs for on and off farm funding to maximize the benefits of both programs, specifically in the Colorado River Basin. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, would you commit to continue this cooperation and make it a funding priority in your budget?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review the coordination between DOI and USDA on these programs, as well as the funding levels for those programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 6: Farmers and ranchers in the west receive substantial assistance from federal conservation initiatives to improve sagebrush ecosystem, consistent with state wildlife recommendations. A key driver of these resources are the sage grouse conservation plans, which were a factor for the Fish and Wildlife Service decision against an endangered species listing for the sage grouse last year. Can farmers and ranchers be certain that you will continue to support funding for these land management efforts?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the conservation plans that have been put into place for the sagebrush ecosystem. If I am confirmed, I will review those plans and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Questions for the Record from Senator Jeff Flake

Question 1: The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or "IGRA," was intended to provide an economic engine for tribes on their traditional tribal lands. In Arizona, tribal casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area have created some controversy. Late last year, the State of Arizona and the tribes agreed to amendments to their gaming compacts. Previous Secretaries of the Interior have rejected these compacts negotiated in good faith between tribes and states. Shouldn't the Secretary foster the tribes' collective rights to self-determination by giving deference to the compacts they negotiate?

Response: I am an advocate for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. In general, if a tribe and a state have reached an agreement, it should be given meaning, but I will have

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to learn more about specific instances such as the one to which you refer and I look forward to doing so.

Question 2: The Department's Colorado River Basin study identified a growing gap between water supply and demand in the basin. One of the options identified by the Department and the State of Arizona is desalination of seawater. Israel has been a world leader in desalination and there are a number of partnerships developing with Israel on water. These include the participation of Arizona Governor Ducey in a recent trade mission and water conference in Israel. What role do you see the Department playing in desalination technology and cooperation with Israel in the water field?

Response: Israel is our ally, and cooperation with Israel will be an important part of President Trump's foreign policy. Your question highlights one of the many ways that our country's cooperation with Israel can provide a benefit here at home. Finding new water supplies and securing existing supplies is important to all western state economies and desalination is one of the possible options. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this and working with you moving forward.

Questions for the Record from Senator Al Franken

Question 1: If you are confirmed as Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). With the multitude of problems in Indian Country today, from disturbingly high rates of youth suicide to a lack of sufficient economic opportunity and many others, we need a bipartisan commitment to address the living conditions on tribal lands. One of the most frustrating issues with the BIA has been the chronic underfunding of important programs and general lack of support from the federal government.

- a. As Secretary of Interior, would you advocate for strong funding for federal programs that support American Indians?

Response: Yes, as appropriate.

- b. Do you have a timeline for filling BIA positions?

Response: If confirmed, the timeline for filling positions at the BIA is the same as it is for all other positions – as quickly as possible.

- c. Will expand on your ideas for improving living conditions in Indian Country?

Response: I believe we need to listen to the tribes and we need to work to empower them, recognizing that each Tribe's situation is different.

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Question 2: Economic development is vital for improving Indian Country, and one area of opportunity is the energy sector. For example, there is significant potential for clean energy development in Indian Country—like wind, solar, and biomass.

- a. Will you commit to working with me to boost renewable energy generation on tribal lands, which would bring important funds and jobs to these communities?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will work with you.

- b. I have been working to fund the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TIELGP), which was included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 but has never been funded. This program would allow the DOE to guarantee up to 90 percent of the principal and interest of a loan issued to an Indian tribe for energy development. By leveraging federal resources, this program would encourage borrowers to partner with the private sector to develop energy projects. While I know that this program falls outside of the purview of the DOI, would you commit to working with me to get this program funded?

Response: I will commit to learning more about the program. I would be happy to work with the Secretary of Energy and you as appropriate.

Question 3: Many of the communities in my home state of Minnesota cannot safely rely on the water currently supplied to their homes. These communities and my state have worked tirelessly, investing millions of dollars, in a tristate water system known as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System. A successful state and federal partnership, Lewis & Clark is funded by local communities, states and expected annual funds from the federal government. Like two water projects in your home state of Montana, federal funding for Lewis & Clark is allocated through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. Nearly completed, all communities and states involved have paid their share of the project and in numerous cases, prefunded the necessary dollars to complete this critical water project. However, the federal share of the project has fallen short year-after-year, putting the project far behind construction schedule causing an increase in cost to the project. Will you support prioritizing the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System through the water funds allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: I am unaware of the specifics regarding the funding for the referenced project, but I will look into it as the budget for the Department is developed, if I am confirmed.

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Question 4: I appreciate your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In April of 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board received one of 8 new Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grants administered through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state and local assistance program for Sheridan Veteran's Memorial Park. This grant is helping to connect low income communities to trail networks, an environmentally restored riverfront, and other outdoor recreation opportunities near Minneapolis' newest war memorial. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to ensuring LWCF dollars continue to foster partnerships that connect people, particularly those in underserved communities, to safe, accessible places to enjoy the great outdoors and establish meaningful relationships with their communities and public lands?

Response: Senator, growing up in Whitefish, Montana, Glacier Park was the sort of national park I learned about as a kid. But I recognize that lots of kids don't have the opportunity to visit parks like Glacier, and for them an urban park may be their gateway to our great national parks. I want our parks to serve and inspire all Americans, and I will work with you to accomplish that goal.

Question 5: Under what circumstances would support or oppose the transfer of public land to state governments? For example, if Congress passed a bill transferring large sections of public lands to the states, would you recommend that the President veto it?

Response: I generally oppose the sale or transfer of federal lands, and President-elect Trump shares that view. There are some situations in which commitments have previously been made, inholdings need to be swapped or exchanged, or land banks are well situated to address the needs of growing urban areas, where limited transfer is appropriate. However, to your question, while I would wait to evaluate any legislation based on its specifics, I am inclined to oppose legislation that would transfer "large sections of public lands to the states."

Question 6: Do you support allowing state and local governments to manage federal public lands? From a practical standpoint, how is this different from transferring federal lands to states?

Response: Yes.

Federal lands belong to all Americans, but they need to be managed with particular consideration of the people in local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the land. Implicit in the notion of allowing local and state governments to manage federal lands is the belief that local and state officials will be more aware and respectful of the interests of their local constituents and that land will be managed differently based on local considerations. I believe that

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federal ownership and local management can provide the proper balance among interests and be a viable model for management of certain federal lands.

Question 7: According to the Bureau of Land Management's statistics for Fiscal Year 2015, there are 32.1 million acres of public lands (approximately the size of Alabama) currently under lease for oil and gas activities. However, merely one-third of these acres are actually producing fuel. In fact, the United States has a record high 7,500 approved drilling permits that industry has yet to put to use. In light of this overcapacity, do you believe it is necessary for United States to open up additional public land for oil and gas production? If so, why?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will fully review the oil and gas leasing program at BLM and evaluate whether the acreage levels are appropriate.

Question 8: The United States has been chronically underfunding our National Parks for years. As you know, the parks currently face a more than \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance, including \$47 million in Minnesota. I appreciate that you have committed to working with Congress to solve this unacceptable deferred maintenance backlog.

- a. What do you feel would be the best way to approach this issue?
- b. Will you advocate including deferred maintenance in any infrastructure package the new administration is planning?

Response: As I said yesterday, I want to work to make our park system great again. In doing so, I look forward to working with you to find ways to address the maintenance backlog and enhance our parks' infrastructure.

Question 9: Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing coal production in the United States. Much of this discussion has centered around a supposed "war on coal" being launched by the Obama administration. However, rather than regulation, the decrease in coal jobs has been largely due to the steady progression of automation technology in coal mining, and that fact natural gas is now cheaper than coal due to innovations in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. One industry expert was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in December saying, "the truth is, gas has already made coal uneconomic."

- a. If you are confirmed, you will be tasked with oversight of energy production on federal lands—including about 40 percent of our nation's coal production. Given the current economic reality of energy what do you see as the future of coal?

Response: The Energy Information Administration has projected that coal will remain an important part of the American fuel mix for decades.

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a.b. The Obama Administration put a moratorium on new coal leasing on public lands while it assessed whether taxpayers were receiving a fair return for publically-owned resources. If you are confirmed, will you continue this process?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

b.c. For a century DOI has managed all aspects of oil and gas development on federal lands. Do you believe it should exercise the same authority involving wells that are hydraulically fractured? For example, do you support the current requirement that wells on federal lands capture methane—rather than waste a valuable public resource by releasing a potent greenhouse gas?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on all the regulatory regimes for coal or for oil and natural gas development on federal lands. If I am confirmed, I will review both of these programs in order to determine what changes may be appropriate in the oil and natural gas leasing program.

Question 10: If confirmed, you will oversee the National Parks which currently has a major problem with sexual harassment in its workforce. As I understand it, Park Service employees with sexual harassment claims are forced to deal with a complex and opaque complaint process and are often afraid to come forward for fear of retaliation. How will you address the culture at the National Park Service that deters abused workers from coming forward with their claims? What steps will you take to ensure our national parks are safe for visitors and workers alike?

Response: If confirmed, as I described in yesterday's hearing, I will work to ensure we have zero tolerance policy for the sexual harassment in the workforce. In addition, if confirmed, I will need to learn more about the specific problems that exist and then address them in the context of a zero tolerance policy.

Question 11: With a changing climate, we are seeing longer wildfire seasons and more extreme fires. At the same time, more and more people in the United States are living in and around forests, grasslands, shrublands, and other vegetated natural areas – places commonly referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Approximately 70,000 communities nationwide are considered to be at

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high risk from wildland fire, including some in Minnesota. Defense of private property – much of which is located in the WUI – accounts for a large percentage of fire suppression costs. How will you work with the United States Forest Service to mitigate the costs of these fires while ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities?

Response: The issues surrounding the prevention of forest fires and funding for fire suppression efforts are tremendously important. If I am confirmed, I will fully evaluate the Department's current role in fire prevention and suppression and work closely with USDA, the Forest Service, the States and Congress to ensure that these programs are appropriately funded and managed.

Question 12: Do you believe that climate change impacts should be included in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies, which requires them to include climate change impacts in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. I have not studied the issue.

Question 13: Do you believe that climate change has a cost to society and that this social cost of carbon should be used in regulatory analyses?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies which requires them to include the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other major federal rulemaking analyses.

Question 14: If confirmed, what will do you do to promote renewable electricity generation—including wind and solar—on public lands?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 15: One of the many impacts of climate change has been the increasingly difficult problem of invasive species. Large areas of public lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior have been damaged by invasions of non-native plants and wildlife. This problem both significantly threatens our most valued ecosystems and places a difficult financial burden on federal and state wildlife management programs, which detracts from their other important duties. Minnesotans are on the frontlines of this problem with the onset

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harmful invasive species in our state such as emerald ash borer, zebra mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil.

- a. What actions would you take to enhance effectiveness of invasive species control programs on public lands?
- b. The Lacey Act is the most important federal statute in addressing the spread of invasive species. If confirmed, would you enforce the Lacey Act in its current form and list potential invaders as injurious? Additionally, would you call for any legislative changes to be made to the Lacey Act?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; most recently with a very worrisome invasion by zebra mussels. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I will most definitely enforce the Lacey Act if confirmed, and I am aware that there is broad bipartisan frustration with the lack of an efficient process for listing injurious species under the Act. I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide me recommendations on how the Act's implementation may be approved, and if it seems that legislative changes may be helpful, I would be pleased to have that conversation with the Congress.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: You have been a strong partner in the House on improving treatment of our National Forests. As you know, in many ways, Montana is ground zero for obstructionist litigation which hold up common sense, collaboratively developed forest health projects. In the House, you introduced counterpart legislation to my *Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act*. Senator Tester joined us in this effort as well as a cosponsor. This bill would avoid the effects of a disastrous 9th Circuit Court decision in *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. United States Forest Service (Cottonwood)* by codifying the Obama Administration's position into law.

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in *Cottonwood* that the U.S. Forest Service (FS) needed to reinstate consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at the programmatic (plan) level following the 2009 designation of critical habitat for the Canada lynx. As a result of this ruling, courts have stopped projects during the consultation process throughout the 18 national forests inhabited by lynx. The Department of Justice (DOJ), advocating a view shared by the FS and FWS, argued that the Endangered Species Act does not require re-initiation of consultation on completed forest plans and that only project-level analysis is needed. The Tenth Circuit in 2007 ruled in favor of the FS/FWS' position in a similar case, *Forest Guardians v. Forsgren*.

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In May 2016, DOJ filed a writ of certiorari petition to the U.S. Supreme Court to ask for review of the *Cottonwood* ruling and resolve the conflicting circuit opinions. On October 11, 2016, the Supreme Court denied this request, allowing the Ninth Circuit's *Cottonwood* decision to stand. As such, federal lands in the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona must operate according to the *Cottonwood* ruling, and the impacts could spread to other circuits as well. According to the Obama Administration, the *Cottonwood* ruling could "shutdown land management," substantially increases unnecessary paperwork requirements without conservation benefits, delays much-needed management projects, and encourages more litigation against important management projects. At least two forest management projects in Montana have been held up in Court as a result of the *Cottonwood* ruling.

Congress must act to reverse this disastrous ruling. Congressional action will require leadership from your Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other land management agencies.

Will you commit to work with me and other colleagues to enact a legislative solution and protect worthwhile land management projects?

Response: I share your concerns about this issue. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, we will work together to address this.

Question 2: If it was not for your personal attention to shepherding the *Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act* through the House of Representatives, we would not have succeeded in enacting that historic legislation last Congress. As you know, our work is not finished for the Blackfeet people. In order to effectively implement the Compact and uphold our commitments to the Tribe, our state, and other water users in the Golden Triangle of our state—we need to fully-fund this water settlement.

Will you work with me through the Budget and Appropriations process to ensure robust funding for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement?

Response: Whether in Congress or the Administration, I am and will remain dedicated to ensuring that our commitments to the Blackfeet are met.

Questions for the Record from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Addressing invasive species

Controlling and managing Invasive species is a wide-ranging and constantly evolving challenge. As you know, Congressman Zinke, invasive species decrease biodiversity, damage infrastructure and negatively impact ecosystems. Congress has not been able to address this issue in a meaningful way, as no comprehensive legislation to address the

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treatment, management, and repair of invasive species has been signed into law. However there is a patchwork of laws, regulations, policies and programs in place to mitigate the damage of invasive species. One of the reasons managing invasive species is challenging in a state like West Virginia is because we are a heavily forested state, with considerable amounts of public lands and many large private landowners, including Timber Investment Management Organizations, Real Estate Investments Trusts, coal companies, forest products companies, and family forest owners. This patchwork of Federal, state and private lands makes for a challenging landscape, however it is obvious to me that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Federal government. If you are confirmed as Secretary, you will co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) along with the Secretaries of the Agriculture and Commerce.

What measures do you intend to undertake to prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species?

What steps can Congress take to help you address the issue legislatively?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; including a number of forest pests that threaten the health of our forests. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species. Once I have undertaken a review of this issue, I would be pleased to explore with the Congress any legislative changes that might be helpful to better protect our environment, economy, and public health.

Question 2: Developing energy infrastructure

I am a longtime supporter of our nation's sportsmen and sportswomen. West Virginia's natural resources provide us with incredible vistas and outdoor recreational opportunities. I believe in protecting these resources for future generations of West Virginians and for our guests from around the nation and the globe. But, I am also a pragmatist and I believe that we must balance the economy and the environment. West Virginia has a long tradition of being an energy exporting state. That's a tradition that we are determined to continue but – in order to do so - our nation's energy infrastructure must be modernized and expanded in an environmentally responsible way. I want to

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make sure that, when these projects cross public lands, federal agencies with permitting authority are doing their part. I'm sure you are aware that the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies are engaged in permitting several pipeline projects in my state. And I'm sure you know that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on these matters. The Department of the Interior is a big agency and while you have stated that you are supportive of responsible energy production, I'd like to get a better understanding of how you plan to manage infrastructure permitting and clarify duplications in the permitting process for pipelines.

What specifically will you do to ensure that your agencies' regional offices are being responsive to and transparent with project developers?

Response: As someone who has led the development of an EIS, I know how frustrating it can be to have another federal agency fail to participate as a cooperating agency. I will work to ensure consistency within the bureaus.

Question 3: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a critical tool to ensuring environmental reviews are comprehensive; our natural resources are preserved; and the mitigation of environmental impacts are minimal. There is certainly room for improvement but energy companies rely on the NEPA process to provide them certainty and a "roadmap" for their projects. And, yet there seems to be increasing uncertainty when it comes to these projects - particularly when a federal agency does not participate as a "cooperating agency".

How will you work to encourage agencies like the National Park Service to act as a cooperating agency on a NEPA review in order to prevent duplication? Because I believe that would ensure that the Park Service is using its financial and staffing resources prudently in a manner that is not redundant.

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the cooperation between all of the Department's agencies on NEPA reviews. If I am confirmed, I will review these procedures and ensure that coordination is appropriate.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cory Gardner

Question 1: Senator Shaheen and I passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in December 2016, and President Obama signed it into law. The law requires the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to measure the outdoor recreation economy. This marks the first time that the federal government will measure the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to our economy.

Should you be confirmed to be Secretary of the Interior, will you commit to supporting an ongoing, annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy?

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Response: It is my understanding that the Secretary of Commerce is required to submit the referenced report. I will work with the Secretary of Commerce to support his efforts as appropriate.

Question 2: Will you commit to providing at least \$3 million in funding in the President's budget request for FY18 to the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Southeast Colorado and look for all opportunities to direct additional discretionary funding in FY17 to the Conduit?

Response: Senator, as we discussed in your office, I understand the importance of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this, and I am committed to do that.

Question 3: As Secretary of the Interior, will you make a renewed effort to work with Tribes no matter what kind of energy resources they have, or potential resources, so they can make their own decisions to develop their own resources for the benefit of their members and the country?

Response: If confirmed, this will be one of my highest priorities. As I said at yesterday's hearing on my designation, tribal sovereignty is meaningful and important. I believe tribes should be able to make their own resource decisions for the benefit of their members.

Questions for the Record from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Will you work with western senators to make sure that renewable energy development and associated transmission projects will remain a priority on public lands, while protecting the places where we all love to hunt, hike, and fish?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 2: As the new administration looks at hiring freezes or budget cuts, will you commit to protecting critical functions at Interior agencies, including fire management, law enforcement, realty, and permit processing?

Response: I agree with you that those are critical DOI responsibilities, and I will work to ensure funding for those programs are adequate.

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Question 3: Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 to help restore homelands for tribal governments. Interior Secretaries of both parties worked to move tribal fee lands into trust for nearly 75 years before the Supreme Court struck down a portion of this law in 2009. Since 2009, the Interior Solicitor's office has worked to ensure that the Administrative land to trust process will continue to work for tribes. Can you please share your thoughts for continuing the Administrative Indian land to trust process?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and the efforts taken by the Solicitor's office.

Question 4: As you know, many national forests, parks, and lands were carved out of the ancestral homelands of Indian tribes. Many tribes retain their connections to these sacred lands and places. What are your views about ensuring that these lands remain under federal control, and the need for the Interior Department and other federal land managers to protect tribal sacred places and access to these places for Native Americans?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I believe federal lands should remain under federal control, and I deeply respect the rights and heritage of Indian tribes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department of Interior's management practices respect sacred places and Native Americans.

Question 5: Tribal water rights settlements like the Taos and Aamodt Settlement Agreements promise to resolve long-standing conflicts and reduce uncertainty over water rights. Will you commit to transparently implementing water rights settlements in a way that protects water rights and the environment while ensuring adequate future water supplies?

Response: I appreciate how important these tribal water rights settlements are throughout the western states and to the tribes. I am not aware of the specific issues regarding a lack of transparency in the area of water rights, but as a general matter I believe Interior should act in a transparent manner.

Question 6: Across the West, our quality of life, tourism, and outdoor recreation are driving an economic resurgence and sustainable, healthy rivers and streams, lakes, and reservoirs are foundational to this economic growth. How do we protect and promote these resources while ensuring we have reliable water supplies for farms, industry and municipal use?

Response: I believe we need to recognize that everything needs to be on the table when it comes to our water resources from increased conservation to additional infrastructure. If

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confirmed, I believe the executive branch and congress need to work together to address the issue of water supply and reliability for the next century.

Question 7: Facing persistent drought in the West, Congress has boosted support for the WaterSmart program, the Bureau of Reclamation's primary tool in promoting water conservation and modern, efficient water infrastructure in agricultural and municipal uses. Will you work with us on increased funding and capacity for WaterSmart and federal leadership on efficient water infrastructure?

Response: In the West, water infrastructure is the backbone of local and regional economies, including the infrastructure on Indian Reservations. If confirmed I think it will be important for the Department of the Interior to explore many ways in which it can provide assistance to local and regional efforts to improve water certainty. I look forward to learning more about the WaterSmart Program and how it can be used to improve local economies in the West.

Question 8: You have talked about working with states on Antiquities Act monument proclamations and policies, but you have not mentioned collaboration with affected tribes. Will you commit to meeting with and working with tribes and tribal communities whose ancestral lands and sacred sites are protected by Antiquities Act proclamations before making any decisions about them?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 9: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service just finalized revisions to the eagle conservation/take permit program in December. Will you commit to work with industry to ensure a practical and workable implementation, including incorporating the latest data and an appropriate consideration of low-risk projects?

Response: I am not familiar with the specifics of this program. As a general matter, any program needs to be workable and practical to be successful. If it is not, it needs to be improved.

Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: In Hawaii and the Pacific Region, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in ensuring that they meet their environmental obligations including requirements under the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This work is critical as our nation continues to strengthen our strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Yet, this coordination takes up a large part of Fish and Wildlife Service's resources in the Pacific Island Office.

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As Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for managing the Fish and Wildlife Service and as such, I want to make sure you are aware of this engagement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DoD. I want to work with you to both ensure that this important work can continue as well as to address other important resource management issues under the responsibility of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.

Response: Senator, I do not know much about the relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense on these issues. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, and I look forward to learning more about this important issue as we work together.

Question 2: While in the House you voted in favor of an amendment that would have blocked funding for any listed species for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to complete a 5-year review as required by the Endangered Species Act even though the Fish and Wildlife Service failure to do so is due to insufficient appropriations by Congress. This amendment would have devastated conservation and recovery efforts for as many as 850 species across the country, 137 of which are in Hawaii.

As Secretary, will you work with Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to Fish and Wildlife Service so that they can fulfill their duties, including completing 5-year reviews, to protect and recover our nation's endangered species?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that conservation and recovery programs are appropriately funded.

Question 3: Despite Hawaii and the Pacific Islands being home to a large percentage of endangered species, we have suffered from a lack of funding. For example, in FY 16 the Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Fund was \$17.8 million for Region 1. The Pacific Islands received only 37% of the funding, despite being home to over 90% of Region 1's endangered species.

Can you commit to working with me to provide more federal resources to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands in recovery funding for our endangered species?

Response: Senator, I recognize that Hawaii is a special place with unique needs. If I am confirmed, I will work with you to ensure that funding for recovery and conservation programs in Hawaii are appropriate.

Question 4: Funding for Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants is based on a formula that takes into account human population and land area, with the added caveat that no state receives less than 1% of funding. As Hawaii does not have a large land area or large human population, we receive the minimum amount of funding, despite having a disproportionately large need to protect our threatened and endangered species.

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If confirmed, can I count on working with you to either adjust the formula to account for need (including number of endangered species) or raise the minimum amount of funding that states shall receive?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will commit to fully review the funding formulas for the Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program to determine whether adjustments to the program are appropriate. I will also work with you and Congress to ensure that funding levels for the program are appropriate.

Question 5: As you know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a priority for Hawaii. It drives local economies and is the cornerstone federal program that provides access to public lands for all Americans, and helps protect our incredible diversity of plans and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique and special, as previously mentioned.

Getting into specifics, I understand you supported legislation that reflected the Senate energy bill compromise language that permanently reauthorized the LWCF. Will you carry over that support into your role as Secretary? Will you work to ensure that annual full funding for LWCF is provided in your budget proposal including robust funding for critical federal land acquisition priorities? Along those same lines, will you work with me and other members of Congress to find a reliable long-term funding solution for LWCF?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals, and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work. That includes identifying stable, diverse and long-term funding mechanisms to keep the fund viable for generations to come.

Question 6: Water security is becoming increasingly important across the nation. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During the field hearing a couple of Federally-funded projects that target specific geographic locations, including the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Program and the Bureau of Reclamation's Western Watershed Enhancement Partnership, were mentioned. Due to Hawaii's limited endangered species resources and invasive species threat, coupled with the importance of maintaining the health of our forested watersheds,

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can I count on working with you to identify opportunities for similar DOI initiatives to focus on the Pacific Islands?

Response: Water security is important. I will work with you on opportunities for initiatives that could benefit the Pacific Islands.

Question 7: DOI's stated mission is as follows: "The Department of Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities."

As Secretary, how do you plan to carry out the Department's mission? What will the Department look like in, say 2 years, compared to now? What parts of the Department do you seek to change or enhance?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to restore trust and strong management to America's public lands and resources. In our meeting in your office and at the hearing this week, I shared the impact that attending the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service had on me. I believe we need to ensure that our approach to responsibly managing America's public lands will make our children's children proud in the next century. If confirmed, I will review agency policies, resources, and priorities and look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss areas that would benefit from changes or enhancements.

Question 8: In an op-ed that you wrote last spring you noted that it's our responsibility to "ensure our children and grandchildren's children enjoy the same outdoor opportunities that we have." In Hawaii a lot of our native species are found only in Hawaii and are under constant threat from invasive species, climate change, development, etc.

As Secretary of Interior, what will you do to ensure that our grandchildren's children in Hawaii get to enjoy our native species?

Response: Senator, during the hearing on my designation, you know that I referred on several occasions to my two granddaughters sitting behind me. I am committed to looking at issues facing the Department with a 100-year perspective. I want to ensure that our grandchildren's children look back and think, "They did right by us." Frankly, I don't know all that can be done to address the threat of non-native species, but, if confirmed, I will consult with you and Hawaiian officials, and we will work together to find the best possible solutions.

Question 9: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a successful bipartisan hearing last year on the issue of marine debris. The Fish and Wildlife Service testified on how marine debris is harming wildlife and fouling coastal National Wildlife Refuges.

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Coming from a non-coastal state, what steps will you take to familiarize yourself with this global problem? Will you support the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to continue their participation in the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee? What other steps could the DOI take to help find global solutions to this growing problem?

Response: I am familiar with marine debris, given my 23 years in the Navy and I recognize that it is a serious problem. However, I will need to learn more about the specific role the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement have with the interagency committee.

Question 10: Many of our National parks are suffering severe damage by invasive species. Examples include pythons and other invasive wildlife in Everglades, wild boars and tree-killing insects in Great Smoky Mountains, and saltcedar and invasive grasses in Joshua Tree National Park. The parks in Hawai'i are particularly invaded. The forests of Hawai'i Volcanoes are under threat from many invasive plants, feral pigs, and the plant disease rapid o'hia death. The Park's unique birds are being decimated by mongooses, rats, and avian malaria.

What steps will you take to protect our National parks from invasive species?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems in our national parks. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I am especially concerned that Hawai'i's unique flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive species. I would not want to see invasive species push any of these unique plants and animals onto the Endangered Species list. Once confirmed, I will ask the National Park Service to present me with options for better protecting our national parks from invasive species.

Question 11: I'm sure you are familiar with visitor concerns about noise from park overflights. I understand Glacier National Park deals with issue. Since the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 every national park unit with significant air tour operations (50 or more air tours annually) has been required to prepare an air tour management plan or agreement. This is a joint responsibility of the National Park Service and Federal Aviation Administration. There are 27 national park units that qualify for plans including two in my state, Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes national parks. Yet only two parks have had plans completed thus far (Biscayne and Big Cypress) and both of those just last year.

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What will you do to protect the environment and visitor experience at our national parks from air tour noise?

Response: I hope to work to enhance the visitor experience in our Nation's National Parks across the board. Frankly, I have not given a lot of thought to the issue of air tour noise, but, if confirmed, I will, and I would appreciate your recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Question 12: Last Congress I cosponsored a bill introduced by Senators Murkowski and Cantwell called the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act." As you know, we have a number of volcanoes in Hawaii and this bill would provide important updates as well as unify the monitoring systems of volcano observatories, including the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

As Secretary will you support this bill? Will you make volcano monitoring a priority for the Department and commit to working with myself and other members of Congress to advance this legislation?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary, I will fully support the mission and intent of the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act". Advancing our technological capabilities in this area is important. Volcanos are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission Area. As a geologist, I am aware and fully appreciative of the natural hazards that we face, and will continue to support USGS's efforts to address these risks.

Question 13: When we had our courtesy meeting you said that what is important to me is important to you. In Hawaii there are a number of priorities affecting the state that are important to me and that fall within the purview of the Department. These include:

- securing our freshwater resources,
- Compact of Free Association,
- permanent reauthorization of and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- protecting and recovering endangered species, and
- preventing and eradicating invasive species.

As Secretary of Interior, will you commit to working with me on these issues?

Response: Senator, I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me prior to the hearing on my designation. What is important to you is important to me. If confirmed, I look forward to working together to address these issues.

Question 14: Hawaii is the state most impacted by the three compacts of free association that the United States has entered into with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. I have worked in the past on a

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number of items, including fulfilling our financial commitments to Palau, working to restore Medicaid reimbursements for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), and establishing a one-stop resource center to facilitate the resettlement needs of FAS citizens residing in Hawaii.

If confirmed, can Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa continue counting on your department—and enlist your assistance in dealing with other departments as well—to assist us in working to support U.S. states and territories with large FAS citizen populations?

Response: This is an important issue to me. The relationship between the US, our territories, and the Freely Associated States is significant and deserves special focused attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more and working with you on finding appropriate solutions to the issues they face.

Question 15: Protecting our freshwater resources is becoming increasingly important across the nation as well as to our national security. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During this Congress I will be working to identify and provide federal resources to address water security both in Hawaii and across the nation. Will you make finding solutions to protect our water resources a priority at the department? How will you prioritize funding resources for USGS streamgages and other observational equipment that we rely on? Can I count on you as Secretary to work with me on this issue?

Response: As I mentioned in my opening testimony at my confirmation hearing, water resource security is of critical importance to our nation. I understand and appreciate your concerns related to the complex interaction between fresh groundwater “lens” and saltwater and the critical need to prioritize self-reliance and freshwater security for Hawaii and the country as a whole. I support your efforts to identify potential opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships related to watershed protection and water security, and look forward to working with Congress in developing its funding priorities for developing and protecting our freshwater resources.

Question 16: As our military focuses on the strategic importance of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, we expect an increase in traffic throughout the Pacific region. With that traffic comes an increased threat of invasive species in Hawaii, which is the gateway to the mainland U.S. from Asia.

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As Secretary, what resources will your department provide to assist the Pacific island communities in protecting against this threat? Do you agree with the proverb that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” If so, can I count on working with you to protect our environment from existing and anticipated threats?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to enhance coordination with the Department of Defense and the Pacific island communities to reduce the risks posed by invasive species. I definitely agree that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One place to start will be to explore how we may implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species.

Question 17: As Secretary, you will be responsible for managing over 500 million acres of public lands.

What are your priorities for utilization of these lands for the public good?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I am inspired by the inscription on the Roosevelt Arch in the Yosemite National Park that reads, “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People.” I believe the public good is best met if we keep both of those goals in mind. That means that different portions of our federal lands will be managed differently; that our priorities will vary depending on the land. In some cases, we should honor the Muir model in which man has a light footprint and simply observes nature. In other areas, lands should be managed in accordance with the Pinchot principles of best-practices and allow for greater impact and management by man including the production of resources to benefit our lives and the economy.

Question 18: As Secretary, you will be making decisions that impact our water, air, land, and oceans. You have a record of questioning the scientific consensus on climate change and have alluded to our nation’s energy independence being more important than addressing climate change.

Energy independence does not necessarily have to come at the cost of our nation’s environment. Do you see opportunities for advancing our nation’s energy independence in tandem with mitigating climate change?

Response: Yes. From my years in the Navy, when I observed energy production around the world, I know that energy production in accordance with reasonable regulation here in the United States is preferable to energy production with little or no regulation elsewhere. As a result, I believe the production of domestic energy can both reduce our Nation’s dependence on energy imports and benefit the environment.

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Question 19: The Department of Energy, Department of Interior, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released their 2016 National Offshore Wind Strategy Report and discussed several important improvements to BOEM's regulatory review process. The report recommended that BOEM's existing regulatory process could be improved and made more efficient. This may include establishing more predictable review timelines and maintaining a reasonable level of flexibility given the early stage of the industry's development.

Do you agree to work with the DOE to ensure the regulations and process that govern offshore wind development should be both efficient and fair to help facilitate the growth of infrastructure projects under the DOI's jurisdiction?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 20: With the first offshore wind turbines currently spinning off the coast of Rhode Island, the potential for offshore wind development in the United States is finally starting to be realized. Part of the reason for the Block Island Wind Farm's success is the extensive ocean planning process and corresponding stakeholder engagement process that helped identify an area for the wind farm that provided the least conflict with other users, and kept the broader ocean community well-informed of the project as it developed.

Do you agree ocean planning on a broader regional and national scale could also support other offshore renewable energy projects? Other areas that are also being considered for offshore wind energy development have not benefited from this level of community involvement and conflict identification prior to being bid. How will you direct BOEM to take into consideration the concerns of the fishing, shipping, and other pertinent industries early on in the lease sale process?

Response: President Obama issued an Executive Order entitled Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes in June 2010. If I am confirmed, I will review the Department's compliance with this Executive Order and determine what steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is taking to address the concerns of the fishing, shipping and other pertinent industries within the lease sale process.

Question 21: The Department of Interior is charged with managing the nation's wildlife, natural resources, and public lands. All of these are threatened by climate change. Whether it be sea level rise stealing protected land from coastal National Wildlife Refuges, increased drought threatening migratory bird habitat, or milder winters allowing parasites, like ticks, to overburden large game animals like moose – the wildlife and habitats under the Department of Interior's charge are at the frontline of the negative consequences of climate change. USGS, FWS, National Park Service, and other DOI agencies have all concluded that the science behind climate change is well established and have for years issued rules and followed policies consistent with this position. In 2014 you stated climate change "is not a hoax, but it's not proven science either."

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Will you direct DOI agencies to reconsider their decisions to act in accordance with climate science?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing, the Department's decisions in the past and future should be based on sound science. As I review past decisions and make new decisions, I will keep sound science in mind.

Question 22: The U.S. Geological Survey is an agency wholly dedicated to scientific research and advancement. Its talented and well-respected researchers have authored more than 130,000 publications since the agency's founding in 1879 and are looked to as national experts in the natural sciences.

Do you accept the scientific research and other products that have been produced by USGS? Further, the top mission area listed on [USGS's website](#) is currently "climate and land use change." Will you in any way try to limit USGS's work on climate change issues?

Response: As a student of geology, the USGS has a rich history and a proud tradition. I have been told various, sometimes inconsistent, things about the current work at the USGS labs, and I need to learn more. If confirmed, I will look at those issues. I will try to ensure that priorities are appropriately addressed. I anticipate that I will learn more about the USGS's role in climate change research versus the other the role of other agencies and departments if I am confirmed.

Question 23: How will you navigate the dual responsibilities of overseeing the protection of the nation's environment (including working to mitigate the effects of human-driven climate change) with managing extractive energy projects that are producing the fuel that is driving climate change?

Response: Managing these responsibilities in a balanced and appropriate manner is an essential duty for the Secretary of the Interior. If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the officers of the Department, the public, stakeholders and Congress to develop and execute Departmental policies in an appropriate manner.

Question 24: The Obama Administration was a leader in accelerating the deployment of clean energy on federal lands. Powering Our Future, through the Department of Interior, looks to permit gigawatts of renewable energy on public lands by 2020.

Do you support siting renewable energy projects on public lands? What will you do, if confirmed, to keep in place existing programs like Powering our Future?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work closely with Congress to ensure the appropriate funding levels for the Powering our Future program.

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Question 25: Some examples of invasive species that threaten our native habitat include mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, and worms. These bioinvaders threaten all kinds of ecosystems across the country, ranging from swamps to deserts, seacoasts to mountain tops. Countering these threats would seem to require coordination across many players – federal and state agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other private entities. The National Invasive Species Council was created to facilitate this coordination. As you know, the Secretary of the Interior co-chairs the Council, and provides its staff.

How would you strengthen the Council's leadership in these areas?

Response: If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. I agree that we need to cooperatively engage with States, tribes, local governments, and private landowners to make progress on invasive species. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States and others to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. We also need to create a more effective linkage between the National Invasive Species Council policy operation in Washington DC and the on-the-ground federal land managers across the country who deal with invasive species on a daily basis.

Question 26: Many people think that detecting invasive species as soon as possible and taking effective action to eradicate or contain them is a crucial component of an effective invasive species program. The Department (of Interior) and Council recently published a national "early detection and rapid response" strategy.

What steps would you take to implement this strategy?

Response: I agree that early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions is the most effective and cost-efficient way to protect our environment, and economy and public health from invasive species. If confirmed, I will direct my staff to quickly analyze the new framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions, and provide me with recommendations on how we might work cooperatively with the States and others to more effectively and efficiently deal with new invasive species introductions.

Question 27: When President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) into law on December 28, 1973, it had already passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelmingly vote of 355 to four. Over the last 42 years, the ESA has become one of our bedrock environmental laws. Among other things, it helped to save the American bald eagle, the whooping crane, and the black-footed ferret from extinction. The ESA has prevented the extinction of 99% of species placed under its protection and remains the most important law our nation has ever passed to protect imperiled species.

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Polling shows that the ESA continues to have overwhelming support from the American public (90% of Americans support the ESA).

Will you continue to enforce and strengthen this law that has proved so vital in preventing species extinction?

Response: If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

Question 28: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned that one of your top priorities as Secretary will be to build trust. In the past you have come out on different sides of some very important issues. For example, in 2010 you sent a letter to President Obama urging him to take action on climate change but then later questioned the science that supports climate change. You also support keeping public lands public but just recently voted in favor of a rule that allows the House to consider federal land transfers cost-free and budget-neutral.

When you talk about building trust what do you mean? Do you mean within the Department of Interior, between the Department and the public, or between the Department and Members of Congress? Also, given your support for conflicting actions in the past, how do you specifically plan for people within the Department, the public, and Members of Congress trust you to maintain the priorities you note today throughout your term as Secretary?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, I intend to be a listening advocate and promote openness and transparency within the Department and its 70,000 talented employees as well as with local, state and federal elected officials, other experts and organizations, and the American public. 20 percent of U.S. land is managed by the Department and, if confirmed, I intend to work with Congress throughout my tenure to meet the priorities of the Trump Administration and those outlined for you today.

Question 29: During our meeting you mentioned that your three priorities for the Department are establishing trust, addressing DOI's infrastructure needs, and reorganizing the Department. Along the lines of infrastructure, you had mentioned not wanting to use the Land and Water Conservation fund to pay for the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog within the National Park Service.

What specifically will you do as Secretary to address our infrastructure needs and how will you pay for it? What specific steps are needed to "grow our economy?"

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I am going to work with and on behalf of President-elect Trump to include funding to address our national parks' infrastructure backlog in

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infrastructure legislation. That package is envisioned to address national needs of which the backlog in the national parks is only a part, and I do not know how the administration will propose to pay for the entire package.

As to growing the economy, there are many steps that need to be taken, but a sound energy policy is one of the underpinnings of a strong and growing economy, and I am dedicated to ensuring that our federal resources are available in accordance with best management practices to support that goal.

Question 30: During our meeting you mentioned that one of your three priorities for the Department is to reorganize.

How would you go about reorganizing the Department? Can you elaborate on the specific steps you will take in reorganizing and the expertise you will take into consideration during the process?

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I intend to undertake a 100-year review of the Department's structure and management. I don't know what conclusions that review will reach, but I can imagine they will touch on fundamental issues about the manner in which the Department is structured, where its functions are located, and changes that should be made in resource allocation.

Question 31: If confirmed as Secretary, what would your top three policy objectives be for the Department? For example, one of Secretary Jewell's priorities for the Department was "ensuring healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies." In carrying out those three policy objectives how much consideration would you give to public and community input? What resources do you intend to rely upon to inform these policy objectives?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, if confirmed, my three highest priorities are:

1. Restoring trust by working with rather than against local communities and states;
2. Prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion backlog in maintenance at our national parks, and;
3. To ensure that the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As to the amount of public and community input I will consider, I will say that public and community input is key to my highest priority of restoring trust. The Department must be a good listener.

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Question 32: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned the issue of sexual harassment within the National Park Service (NPS), that you have discussed it with Secretary Jewell, and that you have a zero tolerance policy.

What specifically will you do to prevent further occurrence of this within NPS? What steps will you take to hold employees accountable for reports of sexual harassment? How will you address retaliation? Will you institute reporting mechanisms that make it easier for victims to come forward with reports?

Response: Senator, I have zero tolerance for sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership at all levels of the Department understands how seriously I take the issue, and the issue will be addressed. In fact, I take this issue so seriously that, rather than give you a complete answer today, I would ask for you to give me some time, if confirmed, to better understand exactly what needs to be done and then to discuss with you my findings and the steps I will take to address the issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bill Cassidy

Question 1: Congressman, the President-Elect has talked many times about his desire to create jobs—a message well received in my state. In fact, he’s talked about “big league” jobs and establishing American energy dominance. The outgoing Administration will point to the declining unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December). Yet the Labor Participation Rate, now at 62.7 percent, has also steadily declined since President Obama took office, and that is not a positive trend. The Labor Participation Rate when President Obama took office in January 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 65.7 percent. As I just mentioned, it has steadily declined and has remained at 62 percent since April 2014.

In my state, the oil and gas industry is one of our largest employers. The industry not only employs thousands of hard working men and women but the dollars my home state of Louisiana receives from energy development goes towards rebuilding our coastline. Due to the Obama Administration’s regulatory tactic of “death by one thousand cuts” as well as the decline in the price of oil, folks in my state have been losing their jobs and struggling to find adequate employment to

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provide for themselves and their families. Just last week there was a headline in one of my state's local newspapers that read "Baker Hughes to close Crowley facility." Another headline last month read "Shreveport near top for U.S. job losses".

According to the website 24/7WallStreet.com which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lafayette, Houma and Shreveport, Louisiana all rank at or near the top for job loss in 2016.

While I recognize that oil prices are one of the key drivers for development, regulations also play a pivotal role for the industry.

Congressman, how will you, if confirmed, work to fulfill the President-Elect's commitment to create a regulatory climate that encourages both American energy dominance and job creation while at the same time honoring the Department's mission to protect natural resources?

The departing Interior Department leadership repeatedly used oil prices and lack of industry interest as rationale for rescinding planned lease sales in the Atlantic and Arctic.

- i. Do you believe that the current regulatory environment contributed to "lack of interest" in the prospect of OCS lease sales?
- ii. Considering these leases take several years to develop, do you believe temporary low oil and gas prices are an adequate reason to withhold lease acreage?

Response: Senator, I believe that an uncertain regulatory environment in which companies have reason to doubt whether permits will be issued causes potential lease bidders to reduce the price they are willing to pay. Regulatory uncertainty is reflected in bid prices. I believe reforms are necessary if we want to ensure both that production will be done in accordance with reasonable regulation and our taxpayers will receive true fair value for lease sales.

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Question 2: Last Congress, the committee passed my legislation that opened up access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and expanded the scope of Outer Continental Shelf state revenue sharing. At the end of last Congress, a majority of Senators, with a bi-partisan vote, supported a later iteration of my legislation that would expand revenue sharing for Gulf and Mid-Atlantic States as well as Alaska. In my opening statement, I mentioned that federal revenues from energy developed in the Gulf go to rebuild Louisiana's coast, which is vital to my state's future.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's 5-year OCS plan and aggressive effort to name new or expand current national monument areas means that states such as mine or Virginia where they have large budget deficits are missing out on additional or new dollars that could flow to states.

- iii. What are your thoughts on the most recent 5-year OCS plan proposed by the Interior Department, and will you pledge to work with myself and others in Congress to ensure the next five year plan pursues the goals of energy independence and robust job growth?
- iv. What are your thoughts on increasing and expanding the ability for coastal states to receive revenue payments from the federal leases on the OCS?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's energy independence policy. That will certainly require a review of our OCS lease plans, and I commit to working closely with Congress, the States, local governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy towards OCS leasing.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Minute 319 provides important guidelines for both Western States and Mexico regarding the management of the Colorado River's water, but expires at the end of 2017. The Upper and Lower Basin states have been working on a new agreement with Mexico, Minute 32X, which has been proposed based on Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions. What steps can the Department take to ensure the process is smooth and timely? Can you commit to working closely with the Western States to ensure their concerns are addressed before Minute 319 expires?

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
January 17, 2017 Hearing: Nomination of the Hon. Ryan Zinke
to be the Secretary of the Interior**

Response: I understand there is a longstanding tradition of collaboration on Colorado River between the Secretary of the Interior and the Colorado River basin states. That's a tradition I intend to maintain. I will ensure that we work closely with basin states over the course of the year.

Question 2: Will you commit to strong tribal consultation when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management on Bureau of Land Management land?

Response: I have proudly represented the tribes of Montana in Congress. I appreciate the importance of tribal consultation and will work to implement a culture that ensures opportunities for consultation.

Question 3: In 2014, Department of Interior employees were under threat in Nevada during a standoff over BLM land use. As you are aware, the danger facing Interior employees has increased over the past several years, and we have seen an rise in similar incidents. If you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have an obligation to protect your employees from harm. What are your plans to protect the health and welfare of your employees? How will the Department provide the training and resources necessary to handle these kinds of situations in the future?

Response: If confirmed, and as someone who has spent 23 years in the Navy, nothing will be more important than ensuring Interior's employees have a safe place to work. I will learn more about the specific challenges the agency faces. If confirmed, I will work to free up some of the decision-making on the front lines and collaborate with local law enforcement, which I believe will foster greater trust.



**THE PARTNERSHIP FOR
THE 21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS**

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

We write with respect to the nomination by President-Elect Trump of Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) to be the next Secretary of the Interior. The Partnership for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (P21CSC) is a public-private partnership that works to support and promote the idea of a 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC), convenes partners, and engages supporters around the country and in all 50 states.

We are encouraged by the nomination of Rep. Zinke. During his time in the House of Representatives, he has established a record on issues we hope he would continue as Interior Secretary that are important to the P21CSC such as on youth and veteran engagement through the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) Act.

Rep. Zinke was an early supporter of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act (S.1993 & HR 5114 in the 114th Congress), which has bipartisan support in the both the House and Senate. The 21CSC Act would establish 21CSC as public-private partnerships with land management agencies to engage thousands of returning veterans and young Americans in Corps to strengthen the nation's infrastructure, boost local economies, and multiply returns on our country's most valuable assets – it's unmatched landscapes and people. The 21CSC initiative is supported by the past four Secretaries of Interior (two Democrats and two Republicans) and by numerous private businesses, foundations, and national organizations.

With support for the 21CSC Act, praise of President Teddy Roosevelt and his legacy of conservation, support of public lands for the enjoyment of all Americans, and his work to promote new public-private partnerships for effective land management and conservation, Rep. Zinke appears to have a grasp of the many issues important to the country and Department of Interior. We look forward to expanding 21CSC with Rep. Zinke as Interior Secretary to help him accomplish his goals and continue his record of support on these important issues. Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Sprenkel
Co-Chair, P21CSC
President & CEO, The Corps Network

Harry Bruell
Co-Chair, P21CSC
President & CEO, Conservation Legacy

1275 K St. NW, Suite 1050 | Washington, DC 20005 | p: 202.737.6272 | f: 202.737.6277



January 16, 2017

Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
U.S. Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Re: AFN Letter of Support for Interior Nominee Honorable Ryan Zinke, Congressman,
Montana

Dear Chair Murkowski,

On behalf of the Alaska Federation of Natives, it is my honor to convey our views on the Nomination for Secretary of Interior, the Honorable Ryan Zinke, of the great State of Montana.

Alaska and Montana have many things in common, including our long history of hunting and fishing to feed our families. We bring to your attention the long support in Montana for cooperative agreements and positive working relationships with the tribes in their state. We understand the Nominee supports core principles of federal Indian law such as the federal trust relationship, government to government engagement and support for Native business to build capacity and economies. We commend him for that.

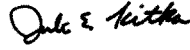
AFN would like you to convey our invitation to the Honorable Zinke to visit Alaska as soon as his schedule allows. We very much look forward to having discussions with him on some of the critical issues facing Alaska Natives as we seek to have more jobs for our people and greater economic development. In the alternative, if his schedule prevents an early trip to Alaska, we would welcome an opportunity to meet in our Nation's capitol soon after his confirmation.

Alaska Natives as the largest private landowners in Alaska are eager to discuss ways that we can contribute to greater economic growth, shared prosperity and innovation in our country, state and local communities. We need greater economic opportunity and would like to see the investment climate changed to incentivize more public-private partnerships in infrastructure, telecommunications, and other national security needs.

Our Alaska Native population, as you know, is a young and growing population and we really want greater opportunities for them to provide for themselves and their young families.

Thank you very much for sharing this letter with your Colleagues on the Committee and quickly confirming the Nominee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie E. Kitka".

Julie Kitka

EST. 1895



January 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman
 U.S. Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member
 U.S. Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

American Exploration & Mining Association (AEMA) strongly supports the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke as Secretary of the Department of the Interior. As a fifth generation Montanan representing a state with a large portion of federal public lands, Congressman Zinke understands the importance of Congress' mandate to manage those lands for multiple-use and how the Interior Department impacts rural communities and economic growth on a daily basis.

AEMA (formerly Northwest Mining Association) is a 122-year old, 2,000 member national association representing the minerals industry with members residing in 42 U.S. states. AEMA is the recognized national voice for exploration, the junior mining sector, and maintaining access to public lands, and represents the entire mining life cycle, from exploration to reclamation and closure. Our broad-based membership includes many small miners and exploration geologists as well as junior and large mining companies, engineering, equipment manufacturing, technical services, and sales of equipment and supplies. More than 80% of our members are small businesses or work for small businesses. Most of our members are individual citizens.


Congressman Zinke understands that mining plays a critical role in America's economy as it is the beginning of the supply chain for manufacturing. A secure domestic source of minerals is important to high paying job creation, national defense and economic growth. Congress recognized that federal public lands in the West are an important source of strategic and critical minerals when, in enacting the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, it declared that "*the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands including implementation of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 as it pertains to the public lands.*" Fulfilling this mandate requires reasonable access, security of tenure and a predictable and efficient permitting process.

AEMA letter of Support
Congressman Ryan Zinke
Page 2

Congressman Zinke also understands, as President Theodore Roosevelt understood, that conservation means development as much as it means protection. He can restore much-needed balance to federal land management and navigate the complex issues facing the Department of the Interior. He is a strong leader who should be quickly confirmed as our next Secretary of the Interior. He is the right man for the job.

Thank you for considering our position on this important appointment.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Skaer".

Laura Skaer
Executive Director



American Recreation Coalition

*Dedicated to the protection and enhancement of everyone's right
to health and happiness through recreation.*

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
VIA FAX 202-224-6163

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The American Recreation Coalition (ARC) wishes to express our strong support for the confirmation of the Honorable Ryan Zinke to serve our nation as the secretary of the Interior. We request that this letter be included in the record for the confirmation hearing on January 17, 2017.

ARC has a deep interest in the lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior and the influence the Department has on outdoor activities across this nation. The parks, refuges, trails, rivers and more that the Department manages attract hundreds of millions of visits each year. Support through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Sport Fish and Boating Trust Fund, the Pittman-Robertson Program and more enhance experiences directly and importantly. We believe the nation needs a passionate and visionary leader for this department, and one able to unite diverse interests around its efforts.

We believe that US Representative Zinke is an excellent candidate for this post. He is a lifelong outdoor enthusiast and his time as an elected official in Montana and the U.S Congress demonstrate his commitment to helping Americans keep the outdoors in their lives. We have enjoyed discussions with Mr. Zinke in his capacity on the House Natural Resources Committee. He has been interested in our views and interested in new ideas and new technologies which can protect natural resources, improve visitor experiences and boost safety. We appreciate his support of partnerships involving federal agencies, enthusiasts, state and local governments and the business community.

There are challenges ahead. More and more Americans are choosing leisure time pursuits that do not involve the outdoors – and lifestyles that bring increased mental and physical health difficulties. Less time outdoors also hampers public understanding of and the embrace of a conservation ethic that values our shared legacy of the Great Outdoors. And federal funding for stewardship of our public lands and waters now

Letter to the Hon. Lisa Murkowski
January 13, 2017, Page Two

competes against other important priorities – from education to health to transportation – needs to be re-evaluated, including ways to tie recreation facilities and programs to the marketplace, where outdoors recreation is a large and growing force.

We would note that Mr. Zinke has a special opportunity to communicate the unique values of America's Great Outdoors to our fellow citizens who have been called upon to safeguard our nation in the military. We strongly support the program which provides free access to those in the military, and the programs now underway to assist those who must overcome the physical and mental consequences of confronting terrorism and attacks on our nation. We thank Mr. Zinke for his service in the military, as well as his decision to continue his service now in the civilian world.

We pledge our full cooperation to Mr. Zinke, as well as the Committee, on the work ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derrick A. Crandall", written in a cursive style.

Derrick A. Crandall
President



January 13, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump,
President-Elect
c/o Presidential Transition Headquarter
1800 F Street NW, G 117
Washington, DC 20270-0117

Dear President-Elect Trump,

On behalf of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA), I would like to express our strong endorsement of Congressman Ryan Zinke to serve as Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Congressman Zinke will help make America Great Again, and the Department of the Interior an effective and efficient agency.

As a lifelong outdoorsman who represents a state in which the importance of public lands to the economy is readily apparent, Congressman Zinke possesses the values and leadership that make him the perfect choice to be Secretary of the Interior.

Congressman Zinke understands the Department of the Interior's role in managing public lands, wildlife and fisheries for the American public and for sportsmen. He "gets" the importance of the outdoor recreation economy and the importance of conservation. He understands from firsthand experience that anglers, boaters, hunters, shooting sports enthusiasts and archers finance conservation in the states through the conservation trust funds – and that these fees paid by the outdoor industries are above and beyond all other taxes paid by this community.

Congressman Zinke understands that public resources are for the American public and are not to be unnecessarily put off limits. His leadership, knowledge, skills and ability make him uniquely qualified to be an outstanding leader of the Department of the Interior.

The American Sportfishing Association fully endorses Congressman Zinke and recommends him to serve in your administration.

Sincerely,

Mike Nussman
President and CEO

American Sportfishing Association
1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 501, Alexandria, VA 22314 · 703-519-9691 · FAX: 703-519-1872
www.ASAfishing.org · info@ASAfishing.org



Toll free: (866) 266-2776 www.archerytrade.org

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Archery Trade Association (ATA) supports the nomination by President-Elect Trump of U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke of Montana to serve as United States Secretary of the Interior.

The ATA is an organization comprised of manufacturers, retailers, distributors, sales representatives, and others working in the archery and bowhunting industry. The ATA has served its members since 1953 and is dedicated to increasing participation in archery and bowhunting and views this appointment as vitally important to the archery industry.

We are confident that Rep. Zinke understands the importance of the archery industry's critical economic impact as well as access to and funding for America's public lands and waters because of his lifelong passion for hunting, shooting, angling and other outdoor activities.

We look forward to working with him and others in the Department of Interior to advance shooting sports, grow jobs in the U.S., and ensure robust public access and quality experiences in the outdoors.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dan Forster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "D" and "F".

Dan Forster, Director of Government Relations
Archery Trade Association

cc: Jay McAninch, CEO/President, Archery Trade Association

Dan Forster

4652 Hawkins Academy Road, Social Circle GA 30025
(770) 601.5038; danforster@archerytrade.org



Bringing
Water
Together

January 18, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Association of California Water Agencies is very pleased to support the nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Department of the Interior. ACWA's 435 public water agency members supply over 90 percent of the water delivered in California for residential, agricultural and industrial uses.

Water agencies and providers throughout the country are facing unprecedented challenges to our water supply and delivery systems. In California, despite recent storms, areas of the state remain in the midst of an historical drought, and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, one of the nation's most important estuaries and hub of California's water system, is in jeopardy. Collaborative work between the federal government and California is essential to solving such water issues. Strong leadership at Interior, such that Rep. Zinke can provide, is urgently needed to rebuild the federal government's partnership with California.

Rep. Zinke's 31 years of public sector experience, including his work as a State Senator in Montana and as a Congressman in Washington, D.C., provide the foundation that makes him a strong candidate for this critically important position.

For these reasons, ACWA strongly supports the nomination of Rep. Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Interior.

Sincerely,

Timothy H. Quinn
Executive Director

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris

SACRAMENTO 910 K Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95814 • (916) 441-4545
WASHINGTON, D.C. 400 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 357, Washington, DC 20001 • (202) 434-4760
www.acwa.org

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Liz Byrne <elizby55@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 1:19 PM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: Zinke Nom. Hearing

To whom it may concern:

I am in utter opposition to Ryan Zinke for the position of Secretary of the Interior. From my research, he looks at the environment, and particularly public lands, as raidable. The best person for the job will be someone who cares about the land and is willing to balance energy needs with preservation. In my opinion, Mr. Zinke is the wrong person to achieve such a delicate balance.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Byrne
(919) 752-0050
Zip Code 27616



The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman, Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski:

On behalf of Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions (CRES), I am writing to express our strong support for your efforts to move the nominations of Representative Ryan Zinke to serve as the Secretary of the Interior and former Texas Governor Rick Perry for Secretary of Energy. CRES supports both nominations and urges that they be favorably reported out by Republicans serving on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

CRES is a 501(c)4 non-profit organization of Republicans who advocate for comprehensive, responsible and free-market solutions to maximize our nation's clean energy potential. There are numerous opportunities for leaders in Congress and the Administration to advance innovative, clean energy solutions that will create high-paying jobs here at home, secure domestic energy independence, while promoting good stewardship of our environment. To that end, CRES believes it is important for the Trump Administration to have these cabinet members in place as soon as possible.

Rep. Zinke has indicated that he takes the stewardship of our nation's federal lands seriously, while understanding the reliance of many rural communities and tribes on such lands. During his nomination hearing, he acknowledged that our climate is changing, and that human activity is contributing to this change. CRES is appreciative that, while he discussed an all-of-the-above energy policy, Rep. Zinke expressed his support for wind and solar development on public lands.

Likewise, in his remarks, former Governor Perry cited Texas' leadership in wind energy production. He specifically stated that he would "advocate and promote American energy in all forms, and that includes renewables." He also indicated that he is "a major proponent of maintaining American leadership in the area of scientific inquiry." CRES is heartened by these commitments about clean energy and energy research and development, and supports Governor Perry's confirmation.

Again, thank you for your leadership of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and your efforts to move these nominations forward.

Sincerely,

James Dozier
Executive Director

cc: Republican Members, Senate Committee
on Energy and Natural Resources

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Christie Colaprico <christie.colaprico@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:12 AM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: Tues 1/17/17 - Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior Nomination

Hi there,

I'm writing about my concern for Ryan Zinke's nomination as Secretary of the Interior. How can one who supports fossil-fuel development on U.S. soil and identifies as a climate-change skeptic be in charge of protecting our land?!?

Additionally, I've heard this appointment was heavily influenced by Donald Trump Jr. - as he and Zinke are reportedly hunting buddies. That seems pretty unethical to me.

Please. The climate change debate is OVER. Science has proven it's an issue. Anyone who denies it has big money interests at play. It's absurd and we need to start acting now to protect the Earth we are blessed with living on.

Thank you,
 Christie

--
 Christie Colaprico
 100 Maspeth Ave, Apt 7D
 Brooklyn, NY 11211

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Ken Conklin <ken_conklin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 14, 2017 3:12 AM
To: fortherecord (Energy); dougdomenech@gmail.com
Subject: Zinke Nominating Hearing and Obama midnight regulation 43 CFR 50

From:
 Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.
 46-255 Kahuhipa St. Apt. 1205
 Kane'ohe, HI 96744-6083
 tel/fax (808) 247-7942
 e-mail Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com

Re: Zinke Nominating Hearing and Obama midnight regulation 43 CFR 50

To:
 Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
 fortherecord@energy.senate.gov
 and
 Doug Domenech
 Lead, Interior Department Transition Landing Team
 The Trump-Pence Transition Team
 dougdomenech@gmail.com

Date: 14 January 2017

Aloha kakou,

Please ensure that Secretary Zinke, and the Department of Interior, and the Trump Transition Team, do everything possible to repeal Obama's midnight regulation 43 CFR 50 which authorizes the DOI to give federal recognition to a Hawaiian tribe whenever representatives of that racial group choose to seek recognition. The final rule was unilaterally proclaimed by publication in the Federal Register on October 14, 2016 to take effect on November 14, following an Advance Notice of Proposed Rule-Making and a Notice of Proposed Rule-Making, each accompanied with comment periods.

The final rule describes itself as a minor regulation because it falsely says, but does not substantiate, that the financial impact would be less than \$100 Million. But according to Census 2010 there are 527,000 so-called "Native Hawaiians", which straight-line interpolation shows would be 600,000 now in 2017, eligible to join the "tribe." The financial impact of federal recognition would be HUGE for the U.S. and especially for Hawaii. The social impact would be even worse, considering that "Native Hawaiians" are 20% of Hawaii's population.

The primary reason why Democrats have persisted in trying to create a Hawaiian tribe where no such tribe has ever existed is to provide legal protection for perhaps a thousand racial entitlement programs that are otherwise unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment Equal Protection Clause.

Note that numerous versions of a Hawaiian Government Reorganization bill to create a Hawaiian tribe were blocked by Senate Republicans throughout a 13 year period from 2000 through 2012, but that the DOI Final Rule 43 CFR 50 is Obama's attempt to usurp Congressional authority by using executive power to create a law that Congress repeatedly rejected. The legislation, and then the proposed DOI rule, were opposed in writing on several occasions by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and by Republican filibusters in the Senate, and on numerous articles by Republican leaders in magazines of national circulation. For further information and citations see <http://tinyurl.com/zkbd22p>

Senator Cornyn, who serves on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, spoke eloquently and at length against the Hawaiian Government Reorganization bill (Akaka bill) on two occasions during an hours-long floor debate on a cloture motion to proceed on June 7, 2006, Congressional Record pp. S5574-5 and June 8 p. S5632.

The best way to kill 43 CFR 50 permanently would be to repeal it through the Congressional Review Act. If that doesn't work out then perhaps a formal written Opinion regarding unconstitutionality, from the DOI Solicitor, would be helpful, along with language prohibiting its implementation in the budget for DOI.

Secretary-nominee Zinke should be asked to pledge opposition to and refusal to implement 43 CFR 50.



www.corpsnetwork.org

January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Energy &
Natural Resources Committee
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the Corps Network, I write in regard to the nomination by President-Elect Trump of Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) to be the next Secretary of the Interior and the hearing to consider his nomination on Tuesday, January 17th. Thank you for your timely consideration of his nomination and for your continued support for public lands, recreation, and youth engagement in our Corps around the country.

We are optimistic about the nomination of Rep. Zinke. Serving in Congress, he established a positive record on issues important to our Corps like public land and water stewardship, public-private partnerships, outdoor recreation, conservation, and most importantly youth and veteran engagement through our 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) initiative. We hope he will continue building on this record if confirmed as Secretary of Interior.

In the 114th Congress, Rep. Zinke was an early supporter of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act (S.1993 & HR 5114), which boasts bipartisan support in the both the House and Senate. The 21CSC Act would establish public-private partnerships with land management agencies to engage thousands of returning veterans and young Americans in Corps to strengthen the nation's infrastructure, boost local economies, and multiply returns on our country's most valuable assets – it's unmatched landscapes and people. The 21CSC initiative is supported by the past four Secretaries of Interior (two Democrats and two Republicans) and by numerous private businesses, foundations, and national organizations.

Rep. Zinke has praised President Teddy Roosevelt and his legacy of conservation and appears to have an understanding of the many issues important to the country and Department of Interior. We are encouraged by Rep. Zinke's support for the 21CSC Act, support of public lands for the enjoyment of all Americans, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and his work to promote effective public-private partnerships for land management and conservation. We look forward to expanding our work with Rep. Zinke as Interior Secretary to continue his record of support on these important issues, and help him accomplish related goals.

The Executive Director of the Corps in Rep. Zinke's home state, Jono McKinney of Montana Conservation Corps, released the following statement after President-Elect Trump nominated him for Secretary and encapsulates our opinions well:



www.corpsnetwork.org

"I'm optimistic that Rep. Zinke will engage this country's rich cohort of Corps as valued partners with Interior to address the millions of dollars of deferred maintenance plaguing our public lands. He was an early champion and co-sponsor for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act, recognizing the value proposition for the American people from leveraging the skills and enthusiasm of youth and veterans to enhance access and improve natural resources on our public lands for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.

As a self-described 'Teddy Roosevelt conservationist,' I think Rep. Zinke can relate to the values held by Corps across the country and reflected in TR's advice that 'Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.' We're doing it every day to maintain trails, combat invasive weeds, improve parks, and restore wildlife habitat on our local, state, and federal lands."

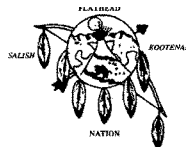
The Corps Network represents our nation's 135 Service & Conservation Corps (Corps) which provide youth and veteran Corpsmembers with the opportunity to serve their country, advance their education, and obtain in-demand job skills and credentials while they perform important conservation, resource management, lands access, recreation, wildfire, and disaster response service projects on public lands and in our communities. Corps enroll over 25,000 youth and veterans annually in all 50 states and DC.

Last year alone, Corps: improved and made accessible 567,000 acres of fish and wildlife habitat; removed 365,000 acres of invasive species; reduced 32,000 acres of fire fuel; responded to 500 wildfire and disaster needs; improved access to 11,000 miles of multi-use trails; and improved 16,000 recreation facilities.

We again are optimistic about Rep. Zinke's nomination to be the next Secretary of Interior. The Corps Network and our member-Corps hope to work with him and the incoming Administration to continue his record of support for 21CSC and Corps, and as a steward of America's great outdoors and amazing natural resources. Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Sprenkel
CEO



A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION
P.O. BOX 278
Pablo, Montana 59855
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FAX (406) 275-2806
www.cskt.org



A People of Vision

TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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Leonard W. Gray
Carole Lankford
Dennis Clairmont
Patty Stevens

**Testimony of Vernon Finley, Tribal Council Chairman of
The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Of the Flathead Indian Reservation
On the Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke
For the Position of Secretary of the Interior**

~ ~ ~

**Submitted to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
January 17, 2017**

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell and Honorable Committee Members

I purchased my plane tickets and had reserved a room in Washington DC so that I could attend today's confirmation hearing of our Congressman and neighbor, Commander Ryan Zinke, to show my strong support for his nomination to be Secretary of the Interior. Unfortunately a dear cousin of mine passed away on Saturday and I will now be staying in Montana for her services. I would appreciate you making this testimony a part of the hearing record.

We think President-elect Trump has made a great choice in asking Congressman Zinke to serve in his Administration and to head up the Department of the Interior. We hope your Committee will favorably report this nomination to the full Senate as expeditiously as possible. Last week I submitted a brief statement to your committee but I also wanted to submit this more detailed testimony that lays out why we believe Mr. Zinke is particularly well qualified for this position.

As most Americans know, Indian people, including the Salish, Kootenai and Pend d'Oreilles people of my reservation have been given many promises over the past two centuries and very few of them have been kept. As such – perhaps more so than others – we believe that actions speak louder than words. In this regard, it is important to look at the actions of Ryan Zinke, because they are in fact quite impressive. By now, the members of this committee and the members of the press have read Mr. Zinke's bio and know that he spent 23 years as a Navy Seal where he earned the rank of Commander and earned, among other awards, two Bronze Stars and served in both Kosovo and Iraq. You may not be as aware of his actions during the last two years in the House of Representatives. As a tribal leader I am of course most familiar with his actions.

in that body as they relate to Indian tribes and want to share with this committee, what I have seen of Ryan Zinke's actions during the 114th Congress.

One of the most important things pending in various congresses over the course of the past four decades has been the settlement of Indian water rights cases. Both the US Supreme Court in *Winters vs. United States* (207 U.S. 564 (1908)) and the Congress through numerous acts have concluded that tribal treaties created water rights sufficient to fulfill present and future purposes the reservation and in almost every instance have seniority dates that give them a priority over competing uses. The fact that the US rarely protected those rights by allowing upstream diversions or even on-reservation uses that were inimical to tribal interests has created significant liability for the United States. It has long been the policy of the United States to settle tribal water rights claims through negotiations at the state level which are then ratified by the Congress. These comprehensive settlements negotiated by state, tribal and federal representatives create certainty on the allocation of water; lead to positive and cooperative relations at the local level which is essential in dealing with a shared resource and include the development of infrastructure at the local level allowing for the efficient use of water and future growth.

During his first term in Congress, Mr. Zinke was able to shepherd through the House the Blackfeet Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2015 (HR 5633/S.1125), with a companion bill introduced by Senators Tester and Daines. This legislation had been four Congresses in the making and was the first Indian water settlement bill enacted into law since 2010. It is historic legislation that will benefit the Blackfeet Nation and their neighbors in many positive ways.

Congressman Zinke also sponsored or cosponsored a number of other important bills that will be beneficial to Indian tribes including, HR 286, legislation to restore the federal status of the Little Shell of Chippewa Indian; HR 1522, the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit Act; HR 511, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015; HR 360, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015; HR 2760, the American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2015; H. Con. Res. 122, PROTECT Patrimony Resolution; HR 5529, certainty for States and Tribes Act; H. Res. 807, H. Res. 807, Expressing support for designation of May 5, 2017, as "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls;" HR 3080, the Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act; and HR 1842, the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2015. We are also aware of numerous letters he has written supporting Indian tribes on a variety of fronts.

During the past Congress he and his staff were readily available to meet with tribal leaders and he visited every reservation and met with the leaders of tribal councils on every reservation in the State of Montana.

We have heard Congressman Zinke speak on the importance of protecting and supporting the sovereignty of Indian Nations and nothing could be more important to Indian country than

having a Secretary of the Interior with an understanding of this essential attribute of tribal governments.

For all of these reasons, we strongly support the nomination of Commander Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Interior and we hope the Senate will act expeditiously to confirm this appointment.

Thank you.

FORT PECK TRIBES
Assiniboiné & Sioux

January 24, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination of Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior

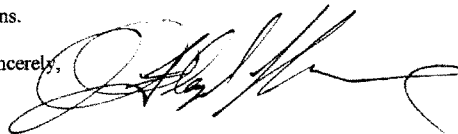
Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the Assiniboiné and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation, I write to enthusiastically endorse our Congressman, Ryan Zinke, and a honorary member of the Assiniboiné and Sioux Tribes, to become the next Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. For Indian tribes, apart from the President of the United States, there is perhaps no Federal official whose decisions and actions impact our day-to-day life more than the Secretary of the Interior.

We are pleased to see that President Trump has nominated a proud Montanan, former Navy SEAL Commander, state legislator and United States Congressman, who, when confirmed, will take seriously the United States' sacred trust responsibilities to Indian nations and the Indian people. We are confident that he will continue to consult and collaborate with Indian tribes and empower tribal governments – the local government closest to the people – to provide better healthcare, education, housing, infrastructure and job opportunities on our reservations.

Congressman Zinke has visited the Fort Peck Reservation and he understands the principle of tribal self-determination and the responsibility of great nations, like great men, to honorably uphold their commitments and contractual obligations. We believe that as Secretary of the Interior, he will be a good steward of our national parks, monuments and public lands, including Indian reservations and will make decisions on behalf of the Interior Department that serve the highest interests of the United States and will be a faithful trustee on behalf of the nation's 567 Indian tribes and our citizens.

Sincerely,



Floyd Azure, Chairman



Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

*8401 73rd Ave. N. Suite 71, Minneapolis, MN 55428
Phone: 763-315-8043 E-mail: Matt@MRAA.com*

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski,

On behalf of the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas, I would like to offer my support for the nomination of U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke of Montana to serve as United States Secretary of the Interior.

The Department of Interior is responsible for the management of our nation's public lands and waterways, and the policies that it puts forth directly impact the recreational boating industry and the outdoor recreation economy as a whole. We believe that Rep. Zinke would be a great fit for this role because, in addition to being a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, he has used his time in Congress to prove himself as a pragmatic champion of public land policies.

Rep. Zinke was a co-sponsor of the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact (REC) Act of 2016, which was recently signed into law and ensures that outdoor recreation jobs are counted by the federal government and will be measured as part of the overall GDP for the first time ever.

The Marine Retailers Association of the Americas (MRAA) is the leading trade association of North American small businesses that sell and service new and pre-owned recreational boats and operate marinas, boat yards, and accessory stores. MRAA represents more than 1,300 individual member retail locations, and conducts advocacy efforts on their behalf. Additionally, the organization provides those small businesses with tools, resources, and educational opportunities to help them be successful in delivering an outstanding experience for today's outdoor enthusiasts.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to support Rep. Zinke's nomination, and we look forward to working with him and the rest of the Department of Interior team to improve recreation in our nation's cherished outdoor spaces.

Sincerely,

Matt Gruhn
President



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the General Manager

January 17, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
SD-304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6150

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Democratic Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
SD-304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6150

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the Board and management of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the nation's largest provider of drinking water, serving nearly twenty million people, it is my pleasure to express our organization's support for the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke to serve as the next Secretary of the United State Department of the Interior. Secretary-Designate Zinke's proven record of dedicated public service and leadership are embraced by more than a quarter century of experience.

We look forward to working with him and the new Administration to promote federal water policies that serve the best interests of all Americans, particularly those in the seventeen western states under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

It is our hope that the Senate will act quickly to confirm the incoming President's choice for Secretary of the Interior, action that is needed to enable the new Administration to implement current and future laws governing the management of precious water resources throughout the western United States.

Please feel free to contact me personally in the event that you or other Senators have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Kightlinger
General Manager

Mission Valley Republican Women's Club
Wendy Davis, President
PO Box 513
St. Ignatius, MT 59865

Dear President-Elect Trump & Transition Team,

As President of the Mission Valley Republican Women's Club (MVRWC, Ronan, Montana), I write on behalf of our organization regarding conflicting concerns about the appointment of Montana Congressman Ryan Zinke's appointment as Secretary of Interior.

As strong Republicans we surely want to support this appointment. However, as described in the information we offer below, and the article attached to this letter, we must express serious apprehension regarding Congressman Zinke's support of Indian tribes and his definition of tribal sovereignty, often placing alleged "tribal sovereignty" as superior to the federal, state and citizen sovereignty defined in the U.S. Constitution.

Congressman Zinke was elected to serve 100% of Montana's population; however his decisions strongly favor less than 5% of Montana residents, and expand tribal jurisdiction over non-tribal Montana citizens' protections, property and civil rights. This has created significant job-loss, economic harm to local counties, towns, and school districts that host Indian reservations, and serious confiscation of state waters and natural resources for the direct benefit to Indian tribes, and direct loss to the State of Montana, its farmers, cattlemen, business and industry.

Mr. President-Elect, there are 577 federally recognized tribes, with 400 listed tribes also waiting for future federal recognition (GAO Report 2014). The American taxpayer has been subsidizing tribal governments for over a century. We wonder about the following:

1. How long must the American taxpayer, as indentured servants to the Indian policies of Washington, D.C., annually subsidize governments that are rapidly removing property rights and protections of taxpayers across the county?
2. How do we put "America First" with the escalating presence of 567 "First Nations?"
3. The generous heart of Americans, and deep respect for American Indian history and culture, has created a never-audited annual burden (among 29 federal agency budgets) upon Americans that likely rival that of the annual Defense Budget. Promoted guilt for historical decisions of the past must not penalize Americans in perpetuity. *Annual* operating budgets of tribes range from the 7-to-10 digit figures that dramatically and financially overwhelm co-located counties and towns across the country.
4. All Native Americans alive today are full U.S. citizens, fully assimilated, inclusive of the use of America's modern technologies such as cell phones, vehicles, television, internet,

gaming machines, etc. With enrollment in a tribe, however, these tribal members lose their civil rights, Bill of Rights and parental rights. Despite enormous federal funding and gaming dollars, the quality of life among tribal members on reservations continues to show minimum or upgrades, even over decades of wealthy tribal operating budgets.

5. No other culture or ethnicity requires perpetual federal funding to preserve its heritage. The Amish follow all American law and preserve their culture because they choose to. American citizens of all persuasions preserve their cultural customs and traditions out of respect and desire. They ask no federal funds to keep their cultures thriving in the future.

Nothing within the four corners of the U.S. Constitution includes tribal governance, tribal sovereignty or any aspect of federal Indian policy. Congress has power over Indian commerce, not Indian tribes. Justice Clarence Thomas put a powerful challenge out to his colleagues on the Bench, and to Congress. Here are his clear words:

“Congress purported [alleged] Plenary Power [all-encompassing] over Indian tribes rest on even shakier foundations. No enumerated power—not Congress’ power to “regulate Commerce. . . with Indian Tribes,” not the Senate’s role in approving treaties, nor anything else—gives Congress such sweeping authority...And, until the Court rejects the fiction that Congress possesses plenary power over Indian affairs, our precedents will continue to be based on the paternalistic theory that Congress must assume all-encompassing control over the “remnants of a race” for its own good. [Emphasis added]

—Justice Clarence Thomas, *U.S. v. Bryant*, No. 15-420, U.S. Supreme Court, **06-13-2016**

Terms like —aboriginal rights and time immemorial—are political propaganda. Anything pre-constitutional or extra-constitutional is unconstitutional...or we have no Constitution. The Constitutional priority tree of sovereignty goes like this:

1. Citizen (Popular Sovereignty, Inalienable rights).
2. State sovereignty (remember the States created the federal government).
3. Federal sovereignty (enumerated (limited) powers).

Why is the Constitution turned on its head, and why are federal, state and local elected officials, including Congressman Zinke, so persuaded that tribal sovereignty is now superior to all other sovereignty in this country? Follow the money and follow political correctness. No elected official wants to be called "racist." No elected official wants to be taken out of office by a tribally funded challenger.

Across the Western States our federal senators, state legislators, county commissioners—too many behave as though their primary allegiance is to tribal governments. The federal “trust” relationship with Indian tribes created by the Supreme Court (1823-1830) may never supplant

the trust relationship that every elected official takes to the U.S. Constitution, including specifically the first eleven Amendments forged to protect every American citizen.

As stated at the beginning of this letter, we surely want to support Congressman Zinke, but as he continues to expand tribal authorities over state natural resources, lands, waters, private property, the economic losses to States is an additional burden shifted to the taxpayers. Tribal governments receive a triple-tax advantage: 1) annual tax-funded subsidies; 2) tax-exempt lands; and 3) tax-exempt gaming and tribal businesses. As this serious advantage annually erodes state jurisdiction and economies, the citizens of the States must replace the losses. There is nothing fair or just within this burgeoning erosion of state economies, based merely on the marketing of historical guilt, and the insatiable demands of an entire "Indian industry" financially funding America's elected officials, and leaning hard on the American taxpayer.

As an alternative, we would strongly encourage reconsideration of Washington's Congresswoman, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, as a more senior, experienced official with greater depth in administration, a balanced understanding of Federal Indian Policy, and an additional "diversity" for the Trump Cabinet, via a woman nominee.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy L. Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendy" being more prominent.

Wendy L. Davis, President – On behalf of our entire Club
Mission Valley Republican Women's Club
Ronan, Montana

Email: daviswendyl@aol.com
Phone: 509-949-8057

The article below is from IndianZ a major Indian Country News website:
<http://www.indianz.com/News/2016/12/15/republican-with-better-tribal-record-tap.asp>

Republican lawmaker with a better tribal record tapped for Interior Secretary
 Thursday, December 15, 2016

This time it's official -- Republican president-elect Donald Trump has tapped a lawmaker with a more favorable record on tribal issues to head up the Interior Department. Since joining Congress in 2015, Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Montana) has supported tribes on water, taxation, health care, federal recognition, economic development, energy, violence against Native women, and sovereignty matters.

If he is confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, he would be the key person in the incoming administration that deals with Indian issues. But Trump didn't mention tribes at all as his transition team made the official announcement on Wednesday. Instead he indicated that other issues on Interior's plate, including public lands management and exploitation of natural resources, were his priorities.

Zinke, however, didn't leave Indian Country out. The announcement noted that he is an adopted member of the Fort Peck Tribes in Montana. "Most important, our sovereign Indian Nations and territories must have the respect and freedom they deserve," Zinke said. As Montana's sole representative in the House, Zinke has championed a number of causes for tribes in his state. The very first bill he introduced after taking office in January 2015 was H.R.286 to extend federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians. While the bill did not become law after it was added to a controversial recognition reform measure, Chairman Gerald Gray counted Zinke among the tribe's "allies and friends" in a statement posted on Facebook on Tuesday. And that support could prove crucial because the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agency at Interior, is still considering whether to grant federal status to the descendants of Chief Little Shell.

Another one of Zinke's initiatives was more successful. He helped secure passage of a long-delayed water rights settlement for the Blackfeet Nation. H.R.5633, the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act, was included in S.612, a national water bill that awaits signature from President Barack Obama. "Water is more than a drinking source to the Blackfeet, it's their life source and we must respect and honor their culture and rights," Zinke said in a press release on Tuesday in which Chairman Harry Barnes offered praise for the lawmaker. Zinke's experience with water rights will prove crucial should he be confirmed to the Interior post.

The BIA and the Bureau of Reclamation, another agency at the department, play critical roles in negotiating and implementing settlements across Indian Country. And in yet another area of interest, Zinke would have the authority to make changes at Interior that he wasn't able to achieve through legislation. He could revive a committee of tribal and state officials that deals with mineral resource issues, something he tried to do with

H.R. 5259, the Certainty for States and Tribes Act.

Zinke's pro-energy stance could turn out to be helpful for some within Indian Country. He has repeatedly accused the Obama administration of engaging in a "war on coal" which he said hindered economic development opportunities for the Crow Tribe. But his push for a coal export terminal that would have benefited the tribe came at the expense of another. During his re-election campaign, he accused his Democratic rival of taking "blood money" from the Lummi Nation, whose leaders opposed the project.

Zinke derided the Lummis as a "wealthy tribe" but did not explain that they opposed the terminal because it would infringe on their treaty-protected fishing rights. The Obama administration halted the project in May in direct response to those concerns. But now that Zinke has been tapped for the president's Cabinet, his departure from Congress could open the door for Denise Juneau, a member of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation who was his rival in the race.

Federal law requires an election to fill a vacancy in the U.S. House although she hasn't committed to running again. "I look forward to a little time off to re-adjust the sails and think about what it is I want to do and accomplish," Juneau, who was hoping to become the first Native woman in Congress, told Montana Public Radio on Monday. Confirmation hearings for Zinke are expected to take place early next year, after the 115th Congress convenes. He would go before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. "As a westerner, Ryan understands the challenges of having the federal government as your largest neighbor and I couldn't think of a better fit for Secretary of the Interior," Sen. Steve Daines (R-Montana), who serves on the committee, said in a press release on Tuesday, before the official announcement.

Trump had been considering another Republican lawmaker with a less favorable tribal record for the Interior job. But Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Washington) basically withdrew herself from the running as Zinke's stock rose. "It was an honor to be invited to spend time with the President-elect, and I'm energized more than ever to continue leading in Congress as we think big, reimagine this government, and put people back at the center of it," McMorris Rodgers said on Facebook on Tuesday.



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

January 17, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

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PRESIDENT
Brian Cladoosby
Swinomish Tribe

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
Fawn Sharp
Quinault Indian Nation

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TREASURER
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Native Village of Tanacross

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Cherokee Nation

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Larry Wright, Jr.
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PACIFIC
Jack Potter, Jr.
Redding Rancheria

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
Darrin Old Coyote
Crow Nation

SOUTHEAST
Larry Townsend
Lumbee Tribe

SOUTHERN PLAINS
Liana Onnen
Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation

SOUTHWEST
Joe Garcia
Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo

WESTERN
Bruce Ignacio
Ute Indian Tribe

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jacqueline Pata
Tlingit

NCAI HEADQUARTERS

1516 P Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
202.466.7767
202.466.7797 fax
www.ncai.org

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI, the oldest and largest and most representative national tribal advocacy organization in the United States, we write to support your nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke to serve as Secretary of the Interior.

It is important for the next Secretary of the Interior to have significant experience and understanding of the issues facing tribal governments and their citizens. Congressman Zinke has developed that understanding as the At-Large Representative for the State of Montana, as well as during his time in the Montana State Senate.

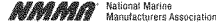
Congressman Zinke's experience in dealing with public safety issues, water rights, education, natural resource protection, and infrastructure for tribal citizens will serve him well as Secretary of the Interior. In addition, Congressman Zinke's distinguished career in the United States Navy will bring a greater understanding of the myriad of issues facing Native Veterans such as healthcare, homelessness and access to services such as career development.

NCAI was pleased that Congressman Zinke has acknowledged the trust responsibility that the federal government has to tribal governments and is committed to ensuring that tribal self-determination policies remain the priority for the Department of the Interior in its dealings with tribes.

NCAI looks forward to working with Congressman Zinke following his confirmation as Secretary of the Interior and finding ways to enhance the lives of tribal citizens across Indian Country.

Sincerely,

Brian Cladoosby
President
National Congress of American Indians



The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski:

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) supports the nomination by President-Elect Trump of U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke of Montana to serve as United States Secretary of the Interior, an appointment of utmost importance to the boating industry. Both land and water management are under the direction of the Department of Interior, with policies directly impacting America's recreational access to federally managed waterways and fisheries.

NMMA is the leading trade association representing boat, marine engine and accessory manufacturers dedicated to advocating for the recreational boating community. The recreational boating industry is a true American manufacturing success story—employing more than 650,000 Americans across 35,000 US businesses. With a \$121.5 billion annual economic impact, boating is an important economic driver that provides a family-friendly activity for more than 88 million Americans who enjoy our products across our country's vast and beautiful waters.

As a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, hunter and angler, Rep. Zinke understands the importance of access to and funding for America's public lands and waters, and the outdoor industry's critical economic impact. NMMA has had the pleasure of working with Rep. Zinke and knows him to be a man of integrity and compassion for the outdoors. Rep. Zinke was a co-sponsor of the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact (REC) Act of 2016, which was recently signed into law and ensures that outdoor recreation jobs are counted by the federal government and will be measured as part of the overall GDP for the first time ever.

We look forward to working with him and the team at the Department of Interior to advance the outdoor recreation sector, grow jobs in the U.S., and ensure robust public access and treasured experiences in the outdoors that also boost our nation's physical and mental well-being.

Warmest Regards,

Thomas J. Dammrich
President

Executive Committee

Chairperson
Bill Wattiers
SynTec Industries

Vice Chairperson
Ben Speciale
Yamaha Marine Group

Treasurer
Scott Deal
Maverick Boat Company

Secretary
Marcia Kull
Volvio Parts of the Americas

EMD Representative
John Pfeifer
Mercury Marine

MACD Representative
Yvan Cote
SeaStar Solutions

Member at Large
Joan Maxwell
Regulator Marine

President
Thomas J. Dammrich
NMMA

650 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 520
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nmma.org

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GA. S. KA
 Geoffrey M. Standing Bear
 Principal Chief

Osage Nation
 Office of the Principal Chief



GA. S. KA O. SA. D. SA
 Raymond Red Corn
 Assistant Principal Chief

January 18, 2017

Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Steve Daines
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke

Dear Madam Chair and Senator Daines:

As Chief of the Osage Nation, I am writing to express our Nation's strong support for President-elect Trump's nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

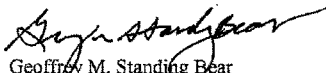
We believe Congressman Zinke has demonstrated his commitment to and support of the government-to-government relationship between each Indian tribe and the United States. In his time in the House, Congressman Zinke has shown an uncommon commitment to respecting and protecting tribal sovereignty. We take to heart the words in Congressman Zinke's statement accepting the nomination – "Most important, our sovereign Indian Nations and territories must have the respect and freedom they deserve." We are very pleased that this is the kind of Interior Secretary Congressman Zinke aspires to be.

The Osage Nation has learned that Congressman Zinke vigorously and respectfully represented the interests of Montana tribes in the U.S. House, which makes us all the more confident he will do the same for all of Indian Country as Interior Secretary.

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Given his record and approach, the Osage Nation is proud to support the nomination of Congressman Zinke to be the next Interior Secretary. We urge the Committee and the U.S. Senate to give his nomination prompt and favorable approval.

Sincerely,



Geoffrey M. Standing Bear
Principal Chief, Osage Nation

cc: Senator James Inhofe
Senator James Lankford

**OUTDOOR
INDUSTRY[®]**
ASSOCIATION

January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
709 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
511 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell and Members of the Committee:

As businesses that depend on hiking, hunting, angling, snowmobiling, biking, and climbing, we write in advance of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee confirmation hearing for Congressman Ryan Zinke to be the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Congressman Zinke has reflected many of the values of the outdoor industry during his time as a Montana state senator, and more recently as Montana's congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives and has the support of Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). OIA's support, however, is based on the congressman's support for community economic development through recreation access, keeping America's public lands public, protecting bedrock land conservation tools and support for long-term reauthorization and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We look forward to continuing to work with Mr. Zinke in his new role as Secretary to support investments in the outdoor recreation economy that will help us create healthy communities and healthy economies across the country.

As you prepare for tomorrow's confirmation hearing, we encourage you to fully examine the congressman's knowledge and support of opportunities and benefits that the outdoor recreation economy brings to communities near public lands, as well as the inspiration it brings to both Americans and international visitors to the United States. In the 21st century, prosperous communities share a variety of characteristics in attracting employers, families and working professionals. Among the most important is access to public lands and waters, and other outdoor recreation, which Congressman Zinke has shown support for throughout his public career.

We hope your committee will work with the congressman in his new role to harness the momentum of the unanimous, bipartisan passage last December of the Outdoor

OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in Congress and pursue policies that will promote and grow the outdoor recreation economy.

Community Development Through Recreation Assets

Public lands of all types, such as trail systems, rivers, lakes and parks, are powerful assets, which provide opportunities for outdoor experiences and generate massive economic activity. These places are the infrastructure of the outdoor recreation industry, which produces over \$646 billion annually, employs 6.1 million Americans, and contributes \$80 billion in local, state and federal taxes.

America's protected natural landscapes are our greatest attractions and simply marketing and advertising them is not enough, we must invest in their infrastructure and in their visitors' experiences on them to continue to power this economic powerhouse and support the communities that depend upon our public lands. If confirmed, Congressman Zinke must work to provide increased resources for the grey and green infrastructure – the trails, roads, parks and bridges our businesses and the American people rely on.

As head of the Department of the Interior, Congressman Zinke will have the opportunity to increase economic development, private investment and prosperity across the country by enhancing recreation access and infrastructure within cities and rural communities. This is especially true in economically disadvantaged communities.

Our shared recreation assets play an increasingly important role in mainstream business development and economic revitalization. Proximity to shared open spaces such as forests, deserts, trails, rivers and lakes, make for desirable places to live, work and retire. As Zinke has seen in Montana, corporations and businesses of all types are using the quality of life that results from access to green spaces and trails as a key tool for recruiting and retaining highly skilled workers and entrepreneurs.

By focusing on the economic development opportunities associated with recreation assets, there is real potential to drive sustained economic growth in communities that are suffering from the boom and bust cycle of extractive industries. Communities lucky enough to have nearby public lands have growth opportunities that can complement traditional land uses and provide sustainable jobs in the near term.

Public Land Ownership

Federal management of our public lands is the backbone of sustainable energy and recreation industries. Shared public land is a critical currency of the 21st century. All Americans benefit, not only from the resources responsibly extracted from our land, but, perhaps even more so, the ability to visit our incredible American landscapes. State budgets simply are not equipped to make the long-term investments that gateway



communities, and the businesses they have attracted, depend upon. World-wide market forces and fluctuating commodity prices have undermined many communities in rural America. Transferring our public lands to individual states will bring increased financial uncertainty to these communities. We urge you to affirm Zinke's commitment to keeping our national public lands in public hands and oppose the transfer of federal lands to the states.

Conservation Designations

The establishment of federal conservation designations in key places around the country have brought increased economic prosperity to nearby communities. Legislation enacted by Congress, local agreements, and at times the Antiquities Act has and continues to play a vitally important role in our national system of public lands by providing the opportunity to protect highly important and vulnerable public lands. There are many examples of federal conservation designations around the country that not only protect objects of historic and scientific interest, but also serve as economic drivers for local communities. The booming recreation economy of today would not be where it is without the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders at the local, state, and federal level and the recreation economy's future depends on the continued preservation of recreation assets.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

As you well know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been one of the most effective recreation programs for over half a century. A bipartisan program, LWCF creates recreation access, improves infrastructure and grows jobs—from urban parks to the beautiful backcountry. All of the tools in the program are critical to its success, and it is imperative that LWCF receives full funding. This program is successful because it makes an impact in every state and county across the country. In a new era of prioritized energy development, there needs to be an offset or increase in royalties to provide certainty for recreation protection and access and for the businesses who rely on our great outdoors. This critical program is set to expire in less than two years and we ask that Congressman Zinke work with the members of this committee to pass a long-term reauthorization and achieve full funding for the program.

* * *

The outdoor community is excited to work with your committee, the 115th Congress and Congressman Zinke, after a successful hearing, to coordinate public land management and funding to support this growing and powerful economic driver. In addition, we hope to hear Congressman Zinke reaffirm his commitment to keep America's public lands public and to protect our nation's recreation assets and outdoor heritage, including those protected through executive designation.



We look forward to working with Congress and the next Secretary of the Department of the Interior on these important matters.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy J. Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Roberts
Executive Director



January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 United States Senate
 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
 VIA FAX 202-224-6163

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable (ORIR) supports the nomination by President-elect Trump of U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke of Montana to serve as United States Secretary of the Interior, an appointment of utmost importance to the outdoor recreation industry. Both land and water management are under the direction of the Department of Interior, with policies directly impacting America's recreational access to federally managed lands and waterways. We respectfully request that this letter be included in the record for the confirmation hearing on January 17, 2017.

As background, the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable is a coalition made up of America's leading outdoor recreation trade associations. ORIR represents the thousands of U.S. businesses that produce and provide equipment, gear, apparel, vehicles and services for the 142 million Americans who enjoy our nation's public lands, waterways, and byways. Spanning outdoor recreational activities such as boating, fishing, hunting, camping, snow sports and powersports, and including recreational vehicles, outdoor equipment and clothing used to pursue these activities, the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable is dedicated to growing diverse outdoor participation, expanding recreational access for Americans, promoting conservation, and bolstering sustainable domestic jobs. The outdoor recreation industry generates \$646 billion-per-year in economic activity and provides an estimated 6.1 million direct jobs.

As a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, hunter and angler, Rep. Zinke understands the importance of access to and funding for America's public lands and waters, and the outdoor industry's critical economic impact. Rep. Zinke was a co-sponsor of the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic

Letter to the Hon. Lisa Murkowski
January 13, 2017, Page Two

Impact (REC) Act of 2016, which was recently signed into law and ensures that outdoor recreation jobs are counted by the federal government and will be measured as part of the overall GDP for the first time ever.

We look forward to working with him and the team at the Department of Interior to advance the outdoor recreation sector, grow jobs in the U.S., and ensure robust public access and treasured experiences in the outdoors that also boost our nation's physical and mental well-being.

Sincerely,

Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable

American Recreation Coalition
American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association
BoatUS
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
Marine Retailers Association of America
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Shooting Sports Foundation
Outdoor Industry Association
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
Recreation Vehicle Industry Association
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America

Cc: Members, Energy and Natural Resources Committee, United States Senate



**PALA BAND OF
MISSION INDIANS**

PMB 50, 35008 Pala Temecula Road
Pala, CA 92059
Phone 760-691-3500 | Fax 760-742-1411

JAN 23 2017

January 18, 2017

Hon. Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Hon. Ryan K. Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Pala Band of Mission Indians strongly supports the nomination of Rep. Ryan K. Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Interior. Rep. Zinke has been a powerful advocate for the Montana Indian tribes, and their treaty rights, self-determination, and most importantly, their sovereignty. We are also honored to support Rep. Zinke because of his military service to our nation. As you know, Native Americans serve in greater number in the armed services per capita than any other ethnic community in our nation. We honor our warriors because to serve is to place community, duty and honor above personal interest. We believe that Rep. Zinke will bring that same dedication to our tribal nations, and are honored to support his nomination. Thank you for your work to confirm this leader as the next federal partner we will work with in our government to government relationship with the United States.

Sincerely,

Robert Smith, Chairman
Pala Band of Mission Indians



Public Lands Foundation

P.O. Box 7226 Arlington, Virginia 22207

January 15, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Energy & Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the retired Federal employees of the Bureau of Land Management and other members across the nation that the Public Lands Foundation represents, we write today to express our support for Senate confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke's appointment to serve as the 52nd Secretary of the Interior.

As a westerner, native of Montana, member of the U. S. House of Representatives and member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Congressman Zinke understands the critical role of National Public Lands in his home state and throughout the West. He has demonstrated a strong commitment to working with a diverse audience of businesses, conservationists, sportsmen and communities in pursuit of policies that seek a balanced and thoughtful approach to economic development and natural resource and public land management. He also has stated a commitment to maintaining public lands for the benefit of all Americans, consistent with the mandate and procedures in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Given these shared priorities of balanced multiple uses and sustained yield on our National Public Lands for future generations we respectfully request that members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources report his nomination to the Senate with a favorable recommendation.

Sincerely,

Jesse Juen, President

Cc: The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

www.publicland.org

QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

P.O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363-0765

January 18, 2017

(918) 542-1853
FAX (918) 542-4694

Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Strong Support for the Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke

Dear Madam Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

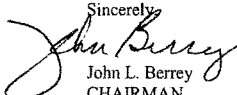
As Chairman of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma (O-Gah-Pah), I am writing in strong support of the nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Tribal sovereignty, Indian self-determination and a positive government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States are of upmost importance to the Quapaw Tribe. As you know, Indian country faces many challenges including reconsolidating fractionated lands, tribal economic development, and providing quality programs and services to tribal members.

In his tenure in the House of Representatives, Rep. Zinke has developed a strong relationship with the Indian tribes in Montana and was, in fact, adopted into the Fort Peck Assiniboine-Sioux Tribe. Mr. Zinke has a stellar voting record on Indian-related legislation, including the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act*, the *Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act*, and the *Native American Energy Act*. Having demonstrated his commitment to tribal matters, we believe he has a thorough understanding of the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes and will be committed to improving and empowering tribal communities.

For these reasons, the Quapaw Tribe is pleased to support the nomination of Rep. Zinke to be the next Interior Secretary. We respectfully urge swift approval of his nomination by the Committee on Energy & Natural Resources and, thereafter, the Senate of the United States.

Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

John L. Berrey
CHAIRMAN

cc: Honorable James Inhofe
Honorable James Lankford



January 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski,

The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) unwaveringly supports the nomination by President-Elect Trump of Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) to serve as United States Secretary of the Interior. This position will fill a critical role in leading an agency which has great influence on the outdoor recreation economy through management of our nation's iconic public lands and waters.

RVIA is the premier national trade association representing recreation vehicle (RV) manufacturers and suppliers who together build more than 98 percent of all RVs produced in the U.S. The RV industry contributes \$49.7 billion to the U.S. economy and provides 289,852 full-time jobs to American workers.

Outdoor recreation in the United States contributes to our gross domestic product and Americans' physical and mental health. It brings foreign visitors to our country and brings families closer together. Most fundamentally, outdoor recreation is an economic powerhouse and a major driver of job creation and economic growth. The outdoor recreation industry contributes nearly \$650 billion in economic output and supports \$6.1 million American jobs.

We applaud Secretary-nominee Zinke for being an outdoor recreation champion and co-sponsoring the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact (REC) Act of 2016. This new law tasks the Department of Commerce (in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior and others) to develop groundbreaking baseline statistics that showcase the importance of outdoor recreation as a distinct component of the U.S. economy.

RVIA is committed to working in partnership with Secretary-nominee Zinke to continue to grow the outdoor recreation economy, expand recreational access at federally managed lands and waters to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, address infrastructure needs, partner to modernize federal campgrounds, and create more jobs for American workers, many in rural areas.

RVIA looks forward to collaborating with Secretary-nominee Zinke and his team to implement the meaningful change our country needs in order to make America's great outdoors great again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Hugelmeyer", written in a cursive style.

Frank Hugelmeyer

RVIA President

RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

1896 Preston White Dr. P.O. Box 2999 Reston, VA 20195-0999 Tel: 703/620-6003 Fax: 703/620-5071 www.rvia.org

Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians

1 West Tribal Road ♦ Valley Center, CA 92028 ♦ (760) 749-1051 ♦ Fax: (760) 749-8901



January 12, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman, US Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Statement in Support of the Nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski,

The Rincon Band of Luiseño Mission Indians of California supports the recommendation and nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke for consideration to serve as the Secretary of the Interior.

The Secretary of the Interior is the chief steward of the trust relationship and is responsible for the direct obligations between the United States and Indian Tribes. We are aware that he understands and respects tribal sovereignty and also cares deeply about Native American people.

Congressman Zinke has a significant sense of the context for the challenges and opportunities facing Indian Country. He is not burdened by any learning curve, but instead would come to the Interior post with a wealth of experience, and proven record of success in government-to-government relationships.

In communications with our fellow tribes in Montana, it is well known that Congressman Zinke is and has been open to listen to Indian concerns and issues. This openness is above all a reason to support Congressman Zinke. Our Indian people only ask to be listened to, which Congressman Zinke has demonstrated he has the ability and experience to do.

For these reasons the Rincon Band of Luiseño Mission Indians and the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association support the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (760) 801-4550.

Respectfully,

Bo Mazzetti, Chairman

Bo Mazzetti
Chairman

Tishmail Turner
Vice-Chairwoman

Steve Stallings
Council Member

Laurie E. Gonzalez
Council Member

Alfonso Kolb Sr.
Council Member



Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

711 Central Avenue, Suite 220, Billings, Montana 59102
 Ph: (406) 252-2550 Fax: (406) 254-6355

December 20, 2016

Attn: Alex Sterhan
 Congressman Ryan Zinke,
 222 North 32nd Street, Ste. 900
 Billings, MT 59101

To whom it may concern,

The Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council is extremely pleased that Congressman Ryan Zinke has accepted the nomination to serve as the next United States Secretary of the Interior. The Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council considers it an honor to endorse Congressman Zinke for this very important office.

As Secretary of the Interior, Congressman Zinke will assume an office representing the United States of America, whose very Constitution acknowledges tribes as sovereign governments. This very office symbolizes a journey that Native Americans have traveled together with their country, a journey encompassing both tragic grief and divine grace.

Our people have served with respect and honor in higher proportions in our country's military than any other segment of society. We have always been here for our country even though our country might not always have been there for us. Today, we speak to you of another warrior who has always been there for us, who was always willing to hear our words and seek to find a way with us to make a better life for our children. He has heard our councils speak near our sacred sites and he has acted on those words. As a former military officer, he has demonstrated what it means to honor one's word, to in effect be a man of honor.

Congressman Zinke's Native American record is one of acknowledgment of who we are as a sovereign people, that water is life to us, that we should be able to determine our own natural resource development unencumbered by paternalism, that we should be able to heal our people without barriers being imposed on us by our trustee, that we need resources to protect our native women and children.

We look forward to building on this record of "trust" with the future Secretary of the Interior so that hopefully someday we can rightfully say that our country's word is one of honor towards the "First Americans." For these reasons, the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council urges the confirmation of Representative Ryan Zinke to serve as the next Secretary of the Interior.

Respectfully,

William F. Snell, Jr.
 Executive Director
 RMTLC



SALT RIVER PROJECT
PAB232
P.O. Box 52025
Phoenix, AZ 85072-2025
(602) 236-2343
Dave.Roberts@srpnet.com

David C. Roberts
Associate General Manager
Water Resources

January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell;

On behalf of the Salt River Project (SRP), I want to express our support for the confirmation of Congressman Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Department of the Interior. SRP serves more than one million electric customers and is the largest water supplier in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

As the first multi-use Reclamation project approved in 1903, Salt River Project knows how important the Interior Department is to Arizona and other western states. Through partnerships with the Bureau of Reclamation and Department of the Interior, the Phoenix metro-area has a sustainable supply of water and power that has helped our economy to flourish. In addition, Arizona has 22 federally recognized Indian Tribes and Communities. Settling tribal water claims is critical to our state, and through years of hard work by tribes, state parties and the Department of the Interior, 13 claims have been fully or partially settled. Congressman Zinke understands the importance of water supply certainty to both Indian and non-Indian users, and we look forward to working with the Department and Congress in the next year to bring certainty to other Tribal water claims as well.

Congressman Zinke has served his country for many decades, in the Navy and as an elected representative for the people of Montana. His background and depth of experience will make him a strong leader for the Department of the Interior as it works to meet water supply and natural resource challenges of western communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David C. Roberts".

David C. Roberts
Associate General Manager
Water Resources

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

January 25, 2017

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kamala Harris
U.S. Senate
B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for Ryan Zinke, Nominee for Secretary of the Interior

Dear Senators Feinstein and Harris,

On behalf of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians based in Highland, California, I write to express our support for Congressman Ryan Zinke from Montana for Secretary of the Interior. San Manuel leaders have had the opportunity to meet Congressman Zinke and his wife Lola. We believe that based on his record of support for Indian tribes in Montana as well as other Indian tribes across the nation, he has demonstrated a willingness to extend support and respect to Native peoples and Native communities.

The U.S. Constitution empowers the Congress to regulate commerce between the tribal nations, the states, and foreign nations. Exercising this power, Congress has enacted many laws that specifically empower the Secretary of the Interior to exercise federal authorities in tribal matters. The Secretary of the Interior supervises the Bureau of Indian Affairs within the Department of the Interior. The Secretary has a crucial role in the relationship between the United States and tribal governments and individual Indians that calls for a person with experience and understanding of Native communities.

In the one term he has served in the House of Representatives, Congressman Zinke has demonstrated a commitment to support tribal governments and communities. He has a record of supporting tribal governments in their efforts to settle long-standing water disputes, to develop their reservation economies to become more self-sufficient, and to develop their tribal police forces to keep their communities safe.

In his confirmation hearing, Congressman Zinke strongly expressed his support for tribal sovereignty and tribal self-determination. He said that the Interior Department must do a much better job in the area of operating schools that educate young Native people. He understands from first-hand accounts the state of health care access for tribal communities. He understands and honors the fact that Native people have served in the military at higher rates per capita than any other group of Americans.

Ryan Zinke is well qualified to serve as Secretary of the Interior. We respectfully request your support for his nomination.

Sincerely,



Lynn R. Valbuena
Chairwoman

cc: Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

01-16-'17 18:16 FROM- CHUMASH

T-418 P0002/0002 F-966

SANTA YNEZ BAND OF CHUMASH INDIANS**P.O. BOX 517 • SANTA YNEZ • CA • 93460**

Tel: 805.688.7997 • Fax: 805.686.9578

www.santaynezchumash.org**BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

KENNETH KAHN, CHAIRMAN
 RAUL ARMENTA, VICE CHAIRMAN
 GARY PAGE, SECRETARY-TREASURER
 MAXINE LITTLEJOHN, COMMITTEE MEMBER
 MIKE LOPEZ, COMMITTEE MEMBER



January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
 Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington DC 20510
 Fax: (202) 224-6163

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 304 Dirksen Senate Building
 Washington DC 20510
 Fax: (202) 224-6163

RE: Rep. Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Murkowski and Senator Cantwell:

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians of the Santa Ynez Reservation, Santa Barbara County, California, write this letter in support of Congressman Ryan Zinke for the Secretary of the Interior.

Rep. Zinke has the support of the federally recognized tribes in home state of Montana. It is a little known fact that Representative Zinke and his wife also maintain a second home in Santa Barbara County and his relatives also own and operate a winery just miles from the Santa Ynez Reservation.

Rep. Zinke has a distinguished history of service in the armed forces. Military service is also a tradition in many tribes across the United States including Santa Ynez Chumash.

Rep. Zinke will protect our public lands and support sovereign tribal governments.

Please contact me if we can provide any additional information in support of Rep. Zinke for Secretary of the Interior.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Kahn, Tribal Chairman

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: idahocolt <idahocolt@emidavalley.com>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2017 3:56 PM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: January 17 2017 Rep Ryan Zinke nomination hearing for DOI

Friday - January 13, 2017

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE

This letter is to express our grave concerns regarding the nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke for the position of Secretary of the Interior (DOI). We the undersigned, request that this statement be made part of the record for the hearing on the nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke.

The western states and citizens have been greatly impacted by the actions, policies, and regulations that the agencies under the DOI have implemented. Those policies, regulations, and actions are very intrusive and abusive to state and local governments and the citizens that reside within those states, often resulting in life altering and negative economic impacts.

One of the most pressing concerns is to have the answer to the questions of what Congressman Zinke's primary platform for the DOI agency is? Is it to restore the US Constitution to the Dept of the Interior and its various subdivisions? Is it to end the racially discriminatory policies of the BIA and the abusive conduct of the other DOI agencies?

Most of the DOI branches, particularly the Bureau of Land Management(BLM), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and others have overreached and consistently intruded upon the sovereignty of the states and the popular sovereignty of private property owners and citizen's.

The BIA is the biggest violator of the U.S. Constitution second only to the EPA.

In looking at Congressman Zinke's political career, his votes and his statements do not support a personal position of supporting the US Constitutional rights of states and all American citizens. In Fact, Congressman Ryan Zinke has consistently shown a propensity for ignoring state's authority and private property rights and a lack of respect for the proper role of national forest lands as defined in the Organic Act, a lack of respect for the general public's use and access to those lands, and rights to water and other state resources. In the observation of the people that surround Congressman Zinke our concerns increase exponentially by the real possibility of Congressman Zinke appointing his close advisors, Allen Mickelson or Vernon Findley, to positions in the BIA. Both have promoted and taken actions that are incredibly racially divisive and abusive to non tribal Americans.

A high percentage of the land base in the western states are held by the federal government. Rep. Ryan Zinke's voting record and public statements indicate that Rep. Zinke is opposed to the transfer of the management of the public lands to the individual states to manage, but fully in favor of transferring the same management and control of the public lands to Indian tribes. Our experience has been that once lands transfer to the control of BIA and individual Indian tribes those lands are then restricted from use by the general public and often only open to the exclusive use of the respective Indian tribes. Our biggest concern is that a Secretary of Interior who has voiced and in fact voted for those types of

policies will seek to give our public lands to various Indian tribes outside of the current reservation system and the general public, to whom the federal government retains those lands for the benefit of the general public now, will be 'locked out' and will ultimately result in the economic harm to those communities that reside within or near those federal lands.

Rep, Ryan Zinke has ardently supported legislation to increase federal land acquisitions which have huge economic consequences for states and local County governments.

Primarily, if Congressman Ryan Zinke is unwilling to positively affirm that he will be willing and committed to bring the DOI back under the U.S Constitution, Commit to a not engage in the expansion of federal land acquisition or putting federal lands under the management and control of American Indian tribes, and to commit to not bringing into any agency under the DOI the above mentioned individuals, he should not be appointed or confirmed by the Senate for the position

We the undersigned individuals ask that the committee reject Rep. Ryan Zinke as Secretary of the Interior and ask President Elect Donald Trump to bring forth a nominee for DOI that will bring all the agencies under the DOI back under the U.S Constitution for the States and its Citizens'. . We have no confidence that Rep. Ryan Zinke will be able to be unbiased but will promote and pursue destructive policies that will impact western states, local governments, and the vast number of private land owners and non tribal citizen's that live in the western region. Those of us who will be impacted the most by his personal alliances and policies do not believe Congressman Ryan Zinke is the right person for this job.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and we look forward to seeing another nominee , such as Cathy McMorris- Rodgers, who will be in the position of Secretary of Interior. One who will unite all American's, restore these agencies to operate within the US Constitution, will not engage in racial divisive policies, halt the expansion of federal land acquisition, commit to not transfer federal land management to BIA Indian tribes, and restore the Constitutional rights of the western states and their citizens.

Pamela Secord	Elaine Willman	Peg Carver
St Maries, Id	Ronan, Mt	St Maries, Id
208-245-0275	509-343-8055	
Idahocolt@emidavalley.com	toppin@aol.com	

Benewah County Board of County Commissioners
 Jack A. Buell, Chm.
 St Maries, ID
 208-245-2234

Carol Harwood	Richard Harwood	John McFaddin
St Maries Id	St Maries, Id	Medimont. ID
Pete Schell	Jean Schell	Gary Stricklin
Elk, WA	Elk, WA	St Maries, ID
Linda Littlejohn	James D. Eder	Alexander Podsaid
Athol, ID	Medimont, Idaho	Kingston, ID

Robin Stanley Mullan, Id	Rachael Littlejohn Athol, ID	Linda Yergler Pinehurst, ID
Larry Yergler Pinehurst, ID	Dave C. Resser Santa, ID	Ester Paul Post Falls, ID
Cody Littlejohn Athol, ID	John Cross Post Falls, ID	Guy McAninch Post Falls, ID
Wendy Davis Ronan, MT	Tom Carver St Maries, ID	Craig Kerwin Hayden, Idaho
Donna Capurso Moyie Springs, ID	Alan Littlejohn Athol, ID	Terry Capurso Moyie Springs, ID
Andrew Scott Blanchard, ID	Sheryll Nuxoll Grangeville, ID	Kenneth J Chausse Harrison, Id
Roberta Chausse Harrison, Id	John M. Bauer Harrison, Id	Joanne Bauer Harrison, Id
Jann Higdem Pinehurst, Id		



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com



P.O. Box 195 Macdoel, CA 96058

January 19, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the Nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke

Dear Madam Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

As Chairman of the Shasta Indian Nation, I am writing in strong support of the nomination of the Honorable Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Tribal sovereignty, Indian self-determination and a positive government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States are of utmost importance to the Shasta Indian Nation. As you know, Indian country faces many challenges, including reconsolidating fractionated lands, tribal economic development, and providing quality programs and services to tribal members.

In his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Zinke has developed a strong relationship with the Indian tribes in Montana and was, in fact, adopted into the Fort Peck Assiniboine-Sioux Tribe. Rep. Zinke has a stellar voting record on Indian-related legislation, including the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act*, the *Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act*, and the *Native American Energy Act*. Having demonstrated his commitment to tribal matters, we believe he has a thorough understanding of the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes and will be committed to improving and empowering tribal communities.

For these reasons, the Shasta Indian Nation is pleased to support the nomination of Rep. Zinke to be the next Interior Secretary. We respectfully urge swift approval of his nomination by the Committee on Energy & Natural Resources and, thereafter, the Senate of the United States.

Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Janice Crowe
CHAIRMAN



SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE

January 24, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the Honorable Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (the Tribe), I am writing in support of the Honorable Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Interior. In addition to resource development, our Tribe advocates for policies that promote tribal sovereignty, Indian self-determination and a positive government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States. As you know, Indian country faces many challenges, including reconsolidating fractionated lands, tribal economic development, and providing quality programs and services to tribal members.

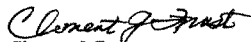
After decades of disciplined governance and energy resource development, our Tribe has built an economy that is balanced, mature and diversified. It is no exaggeration to say that our economy is the engine of growth and household incomes in southwest Colorado. As a result, our Tribe has long been involved in helping the Congress and federal agencies shape a rational, pro-development energy policy.

In serving his home state of Montana, Rep. Zinke has developed a strong relationship with the Indian tribes of that state, and has a strong voting record on Indian-related legislation, including the *Native American Energy Act*, the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act*, and the *Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act*.

With this in mind, we believe he has a thorough understanding of the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes and will be committed to improving and empowering tribal communities, and we urge swift approval of his nomination by the Committee on Energy & Natural Resources and, thereafter, the Senate of the United States.

Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,


Clement J. Frost
Chairman

cc: Senator Cory Gardner
Senator Michael Bennet

P. O. Box 737 * IGNACIO, CO 81137 * PHONE: 970-563-0100

January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304
Washington, DC 20510-6175

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Minority Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304
Washington, DC 20510-6175

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell:

The Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) requests your support for U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke's nomination for Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

SEMA represents the \$39 billion specialty automotive aftermarket industry and is made up of over 6,600 mostly small businesses nationwide that manufacture, distribute and retail specialty parts and accessories for the motor vehicle and off-road markets. The industry produces performance, restoration and styling enhancement parts for use on passenger cars and trucks, collector vehicles, racecars and off-highway vehicles.

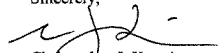
While in the Montana State Senate, Rep. Zinke was a strong voice on the benefits of providing off-road enthusiasts access to public lands. Following his election to Congress, Rep. Zinke served on the House Natural Resources Committee and demonstrated a keen understanding of issues pending before the Interior Department. As Secretary, we believe he will pursue an inclusive approach to land-use decisions that should help ensure local community support.

Of particular interest to SEMA and the land speed racing community, we look forward to having an opportunity to work with Rep. Zinke on helping restore the Bonneville Salt Flats. This premier racing venue has deteriorated over the past 60 years under the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, shrinking from over 13 miles of natural speedway to five or less miles.

On behalf of the industry and consumer communities we represent, SEMA respectfully urges the Committee to support Rep. Zinke's nomination to be the next Interior Secretary. We believe his record of public service, leadership skills, and balanced approach to protecting public lands make him uniquely positioned to lead the agency into the future.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Christopher J. Kersting
President & CEO

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA)
1317 F Street, NW; Suite 500; Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202/783-6007; Fax: 202/783-6024



Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Rosemary <cupasoup99@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 9:26 AM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: 1/18/17 Zinke conformation hearing

Dear Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to the nomination of Ryan Zinke to the office of secretary of the Interior. Mr Zinke has demonstrated that his personal and political interests are in direct conflict with the mission of the Interior Department. The most notable example of this is his support for resource extraction on public lands that should be protected. He is also a climate science denier - not a good qualification for someone proposed for such a high office. Please vote against his nomination.

Thank you,

Rosemary Topar
23 Tulane Trail
Hopatcong, NJ 07843



TULE RIVER INDIAN TRIBE OF CALIFORNIA

January 13, 2017

Attn: Alex Sterhan
 Congressman Ryan Zinke
 222 North 32nd Street, Suite 900
 Billings, MT 59101

To Whom It May Concern,

The Tule River Tribe of California is very pleased that Representative Ryan Zinke has accepted the nomination to serve as the next United States Secretary of the Interior. The Tule River Tribe considers it a high honor to endorse Representative Zinke not only for this very important office itself but also what it symbolizes.

As Secretary of the Interior, Representative Zinke will hold an office that symbolizes and encapsulates the very history of what it means to be a Native American. We must note that history is not to be used to imprison oneself but to inform, to educate others for to do otherwise is always to remain a child. The history of our tribe is intertwined with the story of our other Native American brothers and sisters. It is a story of loss and of beauty. From the Declaration of Independence, to the United States Constitution, to the feeding of corn to George Washington's starving troops at Valley Forge, to being warehoused in the Department of War, to the loss of our land marketed as manifest destiny, to the 1849 Gold Rush with all its tragedy for our people, to the lost and unratified treaties, to the Native American boarding schools, to the near extinction of the bison, to the near loss of the largest North American bird -- our California condors, to our three thousand year old Giant Sequoias reaching ever skyward so that they may touch the Creator, to Jim Thorpe "Wa-Tho-Huk -- the light after the lightning" the greatest American athlete who was so poor that he ran for his country in shoes he found in a garbage can, to being the very last people granted the most powerful weapon devised by man to defeat injustice -- the right to vote, to the code talkers, to the raising of the American flag at Iwo Jima, to the Tule River Tribal Members who by virtue of serving in the United States military sought to serve not only our people but all Americans.

We have heard from our Montana brothers that Representative Zinke has listened to their people and that his deeds of support for them moved them much like the wind moves like waves across the face of the golden fields of the Great Plains. He has heard their councils speak near their dead at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, near the sawtooth ridged mountains of the "Backbone of the World", near the waters of the "Place Where They Dance" and near the mist of the "Great Falls."

The Native American record and Representative Zinke's military record speak to the healing culture and warrior culture in our people. He speaks of self-reliance. He speaks of opportunity not dependency. He speaks of the life-giving force that the land and the water both played in our history and will play in our future. Therefore, in closing, we reiterate that it is a high honor to endorse Representative Ryan Zinke as the next Secretary of the Interior.

Respectfully,

Neil Peyron, Chairman
 Tule River Tribal Council

Phone (559) 781-4271 Fax (559) 781-4610
 340 N. Reservation Rd. Porterville, California 93257



UTE INDIAN TRIBE

P. O. Box 190
Fort Duchesne, Utah 84026
Phone (435) 722-5141 • Fax (435) 722-5072

January 18, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Congressman Zinke to Secretary of the Interior

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

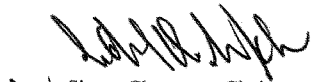
The Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation supports the nomination of Congressman Ryan Zinke to be the next Secretary of the Interior. The Tribe respectfully requests that the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the full Senate work to quickly confirm Congressman Zinke to this important position for Indian Country.

The Secretary of the Interior is the primary Federal official charged with fulfilling the United States' treaty and trust responsibilities to Indian tribes. It is important that this position be filled with someone who understands Indian Country and is ready to work with tribes on a government-to-government basis as we govern our lands and provide services to our citizens.

Congressman Zinke has shown that he respects tribal sovereignty and self-determination, and is supportive of tribal energy and economic development. During his tenure in Congress, Congressman Zinke worked with Montana tribes to advance Indian energy legislation, support tribal law enforcement, promote meaningful consultation with Indian tribes, and settle Indian water rights. We face many of the same issues.

The Ute Indian Tribe looks forward to working with Congressman Zinke as the next Secretary of the Interior. Please contact our Washington, D.C. counsel, Rollie Wilson, at (202) 340-8232 if you have any questions or need any other information. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Shaun Chapoose, Chairman
Ute Tribal Business Committee

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Jan Vertefeuille <janvert@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 6:52 PM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: Opposed to Ryan Zinke for Sec'y of Interior, Jan. 17, 2017, nomination hearing

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to oppose the nomination of Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior. We cannot afford to have a climate change denier and champion of damaging exploitation of our public lands in charge of the Department of the Interior.

I urge you to advise against his nomination.

Sincerely,
Jan Vertefeuille
321 Pedro St
Venice FL 34285



January 13, 2017

VIA E-MAIL:

Doug Domenech
Lead, Interior Department Transition Landing
Team
The Trump-Pence Transition Team
dougdomech@gmail.com

VIA E-MAIL:

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
fortherecord@energy.senate.gov

Re: January 17th - Zinke Nomination Hearing

TO THE PRESIDENT ELECT AND THE TRUMP TRANSITION TEAM:

We write to share concerns regarding the nomination of Montana Congressman Ryan Zinke for the position of Secretary of Interior. Our motivation as municipal elected officials can be illustrated with the following:

"Officials in a small Montana town say they will have to disincorporate the community or declare bankruptcy over an ongoing dispute with the Blackfeet Tribe about water and utility service...lawsuits filed by the Blackfeet Tribe, Two Medicine Water Company and certain tribal members have had the same goal: to eliminate the Town of Browning by bleeding it financially dry, officials reported." —Missoulian, Dec. 25, 2015

Congressman Zinke's approval of the Blackfeet Water Compact accelerates tribal control of Montana waters and forebodes similar financial and jurisdictional futures for hundreds of towns and counties located within former and current Indian reservations. Hobart, like many other local governments finds itself facing similar threats, including a tribal attorney advising Hobart to "prepare to become extinct."

Congressman Zinke has also been a primary sponsor promoting legislation for "Tribal Forestry Management," authorizing any tribe near or interested in a national forest the opportunity to manage the national forest. Tribal governments have absolutely no duty to non-tribal American citizens, practice tribal preference hiring, and would, as forest "managers" determine who, when and how Americans might benefit from the national forest. The loss of national forest use for American citizens could be severe.

Congressman Zinke's hard line insistence that appropriate portions of federal lands in the Western States never be constitutionally disposed to States for management further hardens the burdensome federal footprint in states and denies much needed fire safety and state revenues.

A similar fate of tribal government authority supplanting state and local protection of their non-tribal citizens once threatened the Village of Hobart, Wisconsin, and now threatens Shawnee, Oklahoma and many other communities. So what is the problem with replacing county and municipal government with tribal government jurisdiction?

In the 1880s Congress formally promoted Indian citizenship and property rights with the Dawes Act of 1887. Congress opened up Indian reservations for settling the West and offered non-tribal homesteaders opportunities to locate on Indian lands. Today, all but a small handful of Indian reservations are predominantly populated by descendants of such non-tribal pioneers that settled the West and built this country.

Promises were made by Congress to Indians and non-Indians alike. Under the Obama administration, an intentional *unsettling* of the West by escalating tribal jurisdictional authority over state lands, resources and people is taking a devastating toll.

Tribal governments do not allow non-tribal residents any voice in their government, and have no duty to protect or serve them. With the help of federal agencies and elected officials such as Congressman Zinke, tribes are pushing hard and fast to tax, govern and/or chase non-Indians away from their homes and livelihoods on Indian reservations. Rightful protection of American citizens on Indian reservations is gone when decades of the authority of states, counties and towns is sacrificed for the promotion of tribal sovereignty supplanting state and citizen sovereignty.

Additionally disconcerting is recent policy of the Obama Administration determining that integrating domestic tribalism (Native American) with Middle Eastern tribalism is good "economic development" for America's Indian tribes. This chilling concoction and merging of tribalism bodes serious peril for America. (See the "Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act of 2012 (the HEARTH Act) wherein tribes are authorized to negotiate and enter into leases without further approvals by the Secretary. Specifically, the Act authorizes tribes to execute agricultural and business leases of tribal trust lands for a primary term of 25 years and up to two renewal terms of 25 years each. Leases of tribal trust lands for residential, recreational, religious or educational purposes may be executed for a primary term of up to 75 years (25 U.S.C. Sec. 415). Under this section, the Hearth Act of 2012 allow tribes to long-term lease private tribal trust lands to Middle Eastern ("religious") countries. There are 326 reservations across the lower 48 states eligible to co-mingle domestic and Middle Eastern tribalism.

The White House has also determined that our national power and energy grid that serves all Americans is good "economic development" for privately governed Indian tribes. It should be

noted that tribes have no obligation to the country's national or public safety or to non-tribal persons and properties. Tribal sovereign immunity from litigation protects tribal governments from accountability for any harm that may be done when operating critical components of the nation's public utility power grid. This national security risk cannot be overstated, especially in light of the proximity of the nation's dams on Indian reservations where Middle Eastern activity is now encouraged by the Obama Administration.

Every Indian reservation is co-located on state, county, and/or municipal towns or villages. Since the mid 1850's State, county and local jurisdiction has been present on Indian reservations and remains so today. Among the 567 federally recognized tribes, some 340 Indian reservations are located directly within or near urban areas as well. Only two or three Indian reservations are predominantly populated with Indians. The vast majority of reservations are home to a large non-Indian population. Congress intended and fully opened Indian reservations to encourage settling of the West, and citizenship for Indians. That is the reality federal, state, local and tribal governments now find unacceptable.

Decisions of the Secretary of Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs have direct, immediate, and often severely negative impacts upon municipalities and counties within existing reservations. The Village of Hobart is one municipality among thousands of towns and counties across the country that is located on former and current Indian reservations. The Village of Hobart is an upscale suburb of Green Bay, Wisconsin, located within the former boundaries of the Oneida Indian Reservation. In recent years, leaders of the Oneida Tribe of Indians (OTI) of Wisconsin have openly informed Hobart elected officials to "prepare to become extinct," and have continuously filed frequent lawsuits against the Village. The OTI is located on a former Indian reservation, serves approximately 2,500 tribal members within the Village and has jurisdiction over 1,571 acres of land within this 22 square mile municipality. The OTI annual operating budget ranges from \$450-\$573 million to serve this small population and land base. Hobart's annual municipal budget is about \$6 million and provides full service (sewer, water, law enforcement, planning, and courts) to over 7,000 residents. The financial disparity is immense; continuous lawsuits from the OTI have been costly to the Village and its residents. Local elected officials are called "racists" when successfully defending their municipal authority.

Hobart is not unique. Similar issues are affecting communities across alleged "Indian country."

Several overarching realities on the ground and principles of government intertwine with every decision made by the DOI or BIA. We report a few below that we believe are minimized or overlooked by Congressman Zinke, to the harm of his own constituents in Montana, and ultimately across the country:

1. **Federalism, the balance of power between the federal government and states:** Three sovereignties are clear in the U.S. Constitution: 1) citizen/popular sovereignty; 2) state sovereignty; and 3) federal sovereignty. Tribal sovereignty has never been included in the U.S. Constitution. Yet, federal, state and local officials make decisions as though tribal sovereignty is superior to all others, based essentially on political pressure and

continuous promotion of American guilt. American taxpayers have been and remain indentured servants to this unconstitutional ethnic-based system since the 1800s—a system incrementally removing their state and constitutional protections.

2. **Tribal tax-exempt businesses practicing tribal hiring preferences:** Increasingly escalating business closures and job-loss occur to local tax-paying businesses. Where large tax-exempt casinos and other tribal businesses exist, local restaurants, retail shops, and tourist-related businesses cannot compete.
3. **Expansion of tribal funding:** For years only a few federal agencies served tribal governments such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Health and Human Services (DHHS), and Department of Education (DOE). The Centennial Accord of Washington State, however, became the model for President Clinton’s Executive Order 13084 signed in May 1998, establishing a tribal office in every single federal agency and demanding continuous consultation with tribes, along with inclusion in some 29 federal agency budgets.

Subsequent presidents have continued this Executive Order, including Obama’s similar Executive Order 13175, updated in 2009. The quick math: multiply 567 tribes times 29 federal agencies annually funding tribes, which also receive state tax-dollars and billions in tax-exempt gaming revenue. These cumulative annual federal dollars are likely equivalent to the annual federal Defense Budget **but have never, ever been cumulatively audited**. Federal and state taxpayers are providing annual multi-billions to less than 2 percent of America’s population, while simultaneously removing State protections of citizens, natural resources and lands—all this for a “tribal sovereignty” that finds no home in the U.S. Constitution, and expands apartheid governing principles across the country.

We note a December 15, 2016 Wall Street Journal opinion piece that describes Congressman Zinke’s policies and decisions as “Federal Imperialism,” and believe that Congressman Zinke’s earnest desire to promote tribes as true “sovereign” nations supplanting state and local citizen protections falls exactly into such a description.

Finally, we would note, as mentioned above, the disparity in revenues available to small tribal governments that is overwhelming limited budgets of co-located state subdivisions. In 2015 the fiscal federal budget designated \$20 billion to tribes for basic tribal services, supplemented by \$30 billion in 2015 tax-exempt gaming revenue received by tribes.

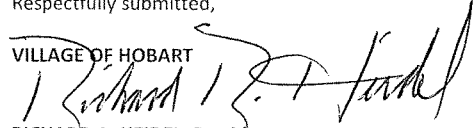
(<https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/politics/20-billion-total-us-support-for-american-indians/>
and
<https://www.nigc.gov/commission/gaming-revenue-reports/>)

The Village of Hobart submits these comments as a word of caution regarding future severe impacts that decisions of the Department of Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs may bring to

further imbalance the relationship between the federal government and its states, and the loss of constitutional protections for American citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

VILLAGE OF HOBART

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Heidel", written over the printed name and title.

RICHARD A. HEIDEL, President

On behalf of all Hobart elected officials

Email: rheidel@hobart-wi.org

Phone: 920-655-3107

Ripchensky, Darla (Energy)

From: Jamie Walsh <jwalshmsw@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 10:04 AM
To: fortherecord (Energy)
Subject: January 18, 2017 Zinke nomination

I'm opposed to Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior

Jamie Walsh
4 Pine Dr.
Belvidere, NJ 07823